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IMPORTANT TRUTHS

RELATING TO

SPIRITUAL AND PRACTICAL

CHRISTIANITY:

Selected from ſeveral Eminent

SPIRITUAL WRITERS.

With divers Extracts from a Treatiſe, Intitled,

THE WAY TO CHRIST,

WRITTEN BY

JACOB BEHMEN.

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THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

THEY who desire such rules and counsels as may lead them through the stormy sea of life, and secure their eternal felicity, may find in the instructions laid down in these discourses, the way to discern the true nature of good and evil, of virtue and vice: that there is no real good but GOD, *no real evil but sin, and that the only way to attain holiness and*

chriſtian virtue, is to reſtrain and regulate their outward ſenſes, their inferior reaſon, and their will and underſtanding, thereby to make way for the Spirit of GOD, *which will then take poſſeſſion of the ſouls ſo qualified, and dwell in them. To imitate* JESUS CHRIST *by mortifying ourſelves, and entirely reſigning our will and underſtanding to the will and light of* GOD, *by a cloſe communion with him in love: and what can render a man ſo happy as to have his love fixed upon an object that will never fail or diſappoint him? for if we are united to* GOD, *he, being eternal, cannot fail; his goodneſs will give us not only ſuitable, but undeſerved returns; his truth will eaſe us of all our jealouſies and fears; his omnipotence will ſecure our hope, and enliven our faith; his omniſcience will enlighten our underſtanding, and his preſence will ſatisfy our thirſty and craving appetites, with antepaſts of eternal joy and happineſs.*

For if our inward ſtate be preſerved from diſquiet and commotions, if we quench the raging

ing flame of our paſſions, if we ſet each faculty to the diſcharge of its peculiar function, not permitting one to invade the privileges of another; and if we make the ſenſes obey the mind, and then ſubmit that to GOD; *what more regular or more happy oeconomy are we capable of? This will bleſs us with eternal peace, adorn our ſoul, as a glorious throne for the reception of our ſovereign Lord, raiſe it from the ſink of ſenſual pleaſures, to a bleſſed intercourſe with the holy Trinity; and make it prefer the glory and happineſs ariſing from a chriſtian life, before all the advantages of nature and fortune. If you deſire to know the authors of theſe Diſcourſes, ſuffice it to ſay, Some of them were men of learning, dignitaries in the church, and miniſters of different ſocieties of Chriſtians. Some noble by birth, and in the army: others of a recluſe life; and ſome illiterate, and of the meaneſt handicraft trades. They lived in different ages, and were of different nations and languages, but all of them aſſiſted by the holy Spirit of* GOD, *to trace back ſin and vice to their fountain, and*

to ſhew how to ſtop their veins, and drain their ſprings, by a right uſe of the means given to us by GOD, *for a holy reſiſtance to our corrupt appetites. To know more of them is not neceſſary, it may be, not expedient, while there are ſuch heats among the ſeveral parties of Chriſtians. But this work cannot but meet with a kind and friendly reception from all, except thoſe who have intirely abandoned themſelves to deſperate diſſoluteneſs and perverſeneſs of mind; for theſe men cannot expect any thing here to gratify their corrupt nature; ſince our authors declare openly againſt all ſuch, and calculated their books for thoſe of a ſpiritual life; which they who are ſenſual are ignorant of.*

It is great pity that many well meaning perſons, great friends to the letter of chriſtianity, are ſuch enemies to the ſpirit of it, as to fly out againſt all internal operations on the ſoul; calling them Enthuſiaſm, Fanaticiſm, and whatever their ſpleen and averſion can ſuggeſt! All the deriſion and ill names given to revealed religion by Deiſts and Atheiſts, are employed by

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ſome againſt what they call Myſticiſm, as the worſt name they can invent. Mean time, there is nothing worſe in Myſticiſm, or Myſticity, than that the harmleſs word ſtands for the hidden inſtruction of the Spirit of GOD, *the human ſpirit being naturally incapable of divine things, as the apoſtle* Paul *has teſtified, and his authority ought to be concluſive, with thoſe who receive him as a teacher of divine truths, in ſimplicity and godly ſincerity, not with carnal wiſdom, but as* GOD *revealed them to him by his Spirit. Nor does Enthuſiaſm (in its true and ancient meaning) import any other thing than theſe ſame divine communications; with this difference, that the perſons under its influence have been ſometimes in extaſies and raptures, as befel the Prophets and Apoſtles upon extraordinary occaſions. Let not the high pitch of purity propoſed by ſome of our authors, terrify any one, for* we can do all things through CHRIST who ſtrengthens us. *Theſe are the very commands of our Saviour, and the practiſes of his firſt Diſciples, to go to heaven by the way of the croſs. Complain not therefore of too many difficulties in*

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the exerciſe of CHRIST's *precepts, which bring ſo infinite a reward with them. They are not contrary even to nature; for all the Philoſophers were ſenſible that mortification was uſeful for the extirpation of vice, and they aimed at that perfection they were capable of, by refining their nature with abſtinence, renouncing of pleaſures, correcting the paſſions and ſenſes, and finally, by employing their minds on the contemplation of the higheſt and moſt worthy objects, and ſtriving (as one of them has it) to exalt themſelves above the rational life, and attain to a ſort of god-like contemplation. For unleſs men ſtudy thus to correct themſelves, all their ſacrifices, prayers, and worſhip, will be in vain. If Heathens ſpoke and acted ſo well by the light of reaſon, to how much higher pitch might the heavenly fire of grace and love elevate our natures, and make us like* GOD *who is love? but inſtead of that which ſhould ſhed its influence on our actions, we ſee the fire of anger, hatred, and envy, puſhing men on to ſtrife, contention, and murder; and the flames of luſt breaking out into lewdneſs, and obſcenity. Can men hope to find the way to hea-*

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ven by ſuch dull torches as theſe are, or to be admitted into the choir of ſeraphims, ſpirits inflamed with the pure love of GOD, *or cherubims who ſhine with native and eſſential light? No ſurely, for that fire of love and mortification which ſhould refine them from their droſs and corruption here, ſhall after this life kindle the anger of* GOD, *raiſe a direful conflagration againſt them, and convert their fiery paſſions into unquenchable flames, which ſhall torment them for ages everlaſting; whereas the ſincere love of* GOD *would diſpel theſe thick miſts that darken the ſoul, and prove that vital heat that preſerves it active, lively, and glorious to all eternity.*

GOD, *by various ways and inſtruments, propoſes his ſalutary truth to man, that ſo, according to the various conſtitutions of their minds, every one may find what is moſt agreeable to his own taſte and condition, in order to diſpoſe and allure him to ſeek and aſpire after divine love. And whoſoever will read theſe Diſcourſes with a free and unbiaſſed mind, and with a ſincere intention to do the will of* GOD,

according

according to the beſt of his knowledge, will confeſs, that they clearly diſtinguiſh truth from falſehood: eſſentials from acceſſories: good from evil: and lead from the corruption and miſery of man, to the tranſcendent love, wiſdom, and goodneſs of almighty GOD.

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OF THE

TRUE AND SOLID

GROUNDS

OF

CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

THE PUBLISHER TO THE READER.

THE wiſdom that is from above, is firſt pure, then peaceable. *How far the Chriſtian world is at this day from theſe divine qualities, is but too viſible. Men have ſo transformed the Chriſtian doctrine by their gloſſes, that it is now hardly to be found among them in its truth and ſimplicity. The doctrine of Jeſus Chriſt, as it is delivered unto us by his Apoſtles, is not now conſidered as the ſtandard of Chriſtianity, ſo much as the Catechiſms, the Creeds, and the Canons, &c. of the different ſects in Chriſtendom. In defence of which men*

relinquish and reject the true spirit and essence of Christianity, the love of GOD, and their neighbours; *and frame to themselves such doctrines as will flatter their corrupt nature, and foster their pride and envy. In some nations it has been the great idol of differing families and tribes, to keep up their feuds and enmities among themselves, and to prosecute them to the last extremities, in the mutual destruction of one another. Such a bloody and irreconcileable disposition, though it has been justly esteemed barbarous in them, is yet looked upon to be a gracious and a holy zeal in the several tribes and parties of Christians, every one contending so earnestly, and disputing with such heat and concern, that they may maintain their own sect and set of opinions, in opposition to all others. And the generality of the respective spiritual heads and guides are so far from doing their duty in restraining these barbarities, that they will not hear of any principles or proposals that may tend this way; but if any thing be offered that may contribute to sweeten the minds of men toward one another, they make it their business to treat the proposers as common enemies, and to give such characters, both of them and of their sentiments, as may lead the people to abhor them.*

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The prejudices which the falſe repreſentations of religion do to the true intereſt thereof, and to the ſouls of men, are innumerable: and how hurtful they are to ſocieties and commonwealths, the preſent, as well as former ages, is a ſufficient evidence. So that we are all concerned, both as we are men, and as we are Chriſtians, in this our day to know the things that belong to our peace, before they be hid from our eyes.

The greateſt part of the following diſcourſe was originally intended to form in the minds of youth trained up in Theological ſtudies, ſuch juſt and adequate ſentiments of religion in all its parts, as might raiſe their concern for thoſe things in it that are abſolutely neceſſary and eſſential; and preſerve them from a blind, ungovernable and furious zeal for thoſe other things, which are either merely circumſtantial, or at leaſt not neceſſary, although they are now made to be the pillar and ground of moſt, if not of all the unhappy and unaccountable contentions that are abroad in the Chriſtian world.

That this diſcourſe may, by the bleſſing of God, contribute to lead men to the true knowledge and love of God in Jeſus Chriſt, and to mutual peace and charity with one another, is the earneſt prayer of

The PUBLISHER.

OF THE TRUE AND SOLID GROUNDS OF CHRISTIAN THEOLOGY.

ALTHOUGH all the parts of the Chriſtian religion do agree in this, that they are revealed and enjoined by GOD; and alſo, that they are directed to the glory of GOD, and the ſalvation of men: yet they are not all of the ſame weight and importance; but being weighed in the balance of a ſound judgment, ſome of them are found to be more weighty than others. The Prophets tell us, that *mercy, the knowledge of God*, and *obedience to his commands*, are more acceptable to him than *ſacrifices and burnt-offerings*, 1 Sam. xv. 22. Hoſea vi. 6. and our bleſſed Lord calls *judgment, mercy and truth*, compared with *tithes of mint, cummin and aniſe*, τὰ βαρύτεραιτῦ νόμυ, *the more weighty*

things of the law, Matt. xxiii. 23. From this consideration there ariseth a distinction or division of that skill, knowledge and understanding, which is conversant about religion, and which is commonly called Theology, or Divinity, into absolute and respective. Absolute Theology, or that knowledge of religion which I call absolute, considers its object only as revealed and enjoined, or instituted by GOD; and its business is, to find out those things which are proposed to us in the Scriptures to be believed or practised, and to discern and distinguish them from all others. Again, respective Theology, or the right knowledge of religion, weighs in the mind the importance, and observes the order, respect and relation of things belonging to religion; whether they be points of doctrine, or precepts, or sacred rites; and teaches to distinguish and put a difference between the accessories of religion and the principals, the circumstantials and substantials, the means and their ends.

Indeed the oftener I reflect upon, and the more narrowly I consider this matter, I am the more convinced and confirmed in my opinion, of the great usefulness and necessity

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of this doctrine. Nor do I much queſtion, but the unprejudiced will be eaſily perſuaded to be of my mind, when they ſhall perceive that the corrupt and dangerous ſtate of the Chriſtian Church at preſent, is in a great degree owing to the want of this knowledge of religion, or of a due regard had to it. For that among all ſects and parties of Chriſtians, true piety is neglected, and divine charity and brotherly love are waxed cold; that they are cold and remiſs in rooting out the luſts and depraved affections of corrupt nature; when in the mean time they lay themſelves out with zeal and application for the propagating ſome opinions that be either obſcure or uncertain, but no ways neceſſary, and for the ſuppreſſing others of the ſame nature which are not hurtful; that ſome religious rites and ceremonies are pertinaciouſly retained by ſome Chriſtians, and as obſtinately rejected by others; that they are at peace with vice and vicious perſons, while they wage a cruel war with error and erring perſons. Theſe things are not ſo much to be imputed to the want of an abſolute knowledge of religion, as of that which is relative. No more can this be attributed to their being ignorant of any Chriſtian pre-

cept, or of any abſolute divine truth that is of any import to ſalvation: but it is becauſe the generality of Chriſtians either do not know, or will not conſider how much repentance, ſelf-denial, mortifying of the fleſh, charity, humility, and the imitation of CHRIST, are of more weight than orthodoxy or a ſound belief, and ſin and vice more hateful than error. Since then the uſe of pure and peaceable Chriſtian theology is of ſo large extent, both for ordering the lives and manners of private Chriſtians aright, and for ſettling the public affairs which concern the peace of chriſtian ſocieties within themſelves, and their mutual concord with one another; I preſume it will be a good office done to mankind, if I furniſh them with a key, by which they may enter into the moſt remote and intricate receſſes of this ſo often commended Theology.

That I may avoid rambling to and again, without order or method in this diſcourſe, I ſhall compriſe what I have to ſay under three general heads. *Firſt*, I ſhall give a rude draught and general idea of this Theology. *Secondly*, I ſhall deſcend to a more

more particular deſcription of it. And in the *third* place, I ſhall lay down ſome concluſions or poſitions, which do naturally flow from this doctrine of pure and peaceable Theology, and are worthy of your obſervation.

AS to the *firſt*, it is to be conſidered, that the eſſence of religion, or of the duty which man owes to GOD, or which GOD requires of man, in whatſoever ſtate, whether that of integrity and innocence, or reſtoration after the fall, or conſummated felicity, doth ſolely conſiſt in the LOVE OF GOD, as our Saviour teacheth us, *Matt.* xxii. 37. where he ſays, that the firſt and greateſt commandment of the law is, to *love the Lord our God with all our heart, and with all our ſoul, with all our mind, and with all our ſtrength.* For GOD being ſelf-ſufficient, and independent of all other beings, did not in the leaſt ſtand in need of the creatures and their ſervice: but being determined by a moſt free and gracious act of his good pleaſure, to take his delight with ſomething without himſelf, he did for that end, after the creation and fall of the angels, make man in his own image (that is, of a nature

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like his own) with whom he might live in friendſhip, and have all things in common; by offering himſelf, with all his glorious and amiable perfections, to be enjoyed by man, and by receiving from him the grateful return of a reciprocal love and affection. And becauſe man is a creature made up of a ſoul, a ſpiritual ſubſtance, and a body which is material; GOD created this viſible and corporeal world, and furniſhed it with innumerable objects for the delighting the outward ſenſes, and recreating thoſe faculties which belong to the ſoul, as it is joined and united to the body; and made man lord over it: to this end, that as the ſoul had GOD, the infinite good, fitted and proportioned to its vaſt capacity, ſo the body alſo might not be without ſuitable and delightful objects. And to this deſign of GOD in the creation of the world, the hiſtory whereof doth excellently agree, we read that this whole viſible world was at firſt created and finiſhed, as a magnificent palace, richly provided with all kinds of furniture; and that after this, man, who was deſigned to be its lord and maſter, was made, and inveſted with the dominion of it.

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For ſo great favours, ſo liberally diſpenſed unto man, GOD required no other teſtimony of a grateful mind but LOVE. And that his love might be noble and free, generous and unlimited, not neceſſitated, forced or reſtricted; it was the will of GOD that man ſhould be at his own diſpoſal: and therefore he endowed him with a free power of determining the acts and exerciſes of his faculties to theſe or the other objects; of adhering to GOD by love, or departing from him; and provided he ſtill continued to love GOD, and to place his delight in him alone, nothing was forbidden him: all things were lawful unto him, and he was maſter of power moſt free (not only in a phyſical, but alſo in a moral ſenſe) to diſpoſe of all his faculties, and of the creatures ſubjected to him, at his pleaſure, and that without any offence to GOD. As for the tree of knowledge of good and evil, concerning which the Scriptures inform us that GOD charged *Adam* not to eat of it; this was not done out of envy, as if GOD had grudged him that pleaſant fruit, (as he was ſlandered by the devil) or intended in the leaſt to diminiſh or infringe the full and free right and power which he had beſtowed upon him, of uſing

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his faculties, and all things under his command at his pleaſure; without prejudice of the love he owed to his Maker. But GOD having even then diſcovered in man ſome remote and dawning diſpoſitions to the love of the creatures, did forbid him the uſe of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, for it was the only tree that grew out of the earth, that had wholly the nature of this earth in it, and wherein death and the corruptibility ſtuck; and that only was able to deſtroy the divine life and image in *Adam*; and to bring him into another image, infected with luſt, anger, wrath, and thoſe affections which withdraw the ſoul from GOD.

After that man had abuſed the liberty beſtowed upon him, by transferring his love from GOD to the creatures, and had thereby violated the law of his creation, and the league of friendſhip that was contracted with GOD; and had alſo loſt the love of GOD, and with it the bleſſed preſence and company of the Deity, who dwelt in his ſoul, and filled it with light, and joy, and peace; to which ſucceeded darkneſs, anguiſh and diſquiet: after, I ſay, that man had made defection from GOD, and GOD was determined to reſtore man, then did the confines

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of religion begin to be enlarged, and beſides the *love of God*, which ſtill holds the principal place among the divine precepts and duties of religion, ſeveral other things were revealed, preſcribed and inſtituted to be obſerved by man, as being ſome of them uſeful, and others neceſſary for recovering the *love of God* that was loſt, and for bringing back man, that was gone aſtray, into the road of his duty.

From what hath been already ſaid, this ſuccinct and general idea of the doctrine of Chriſtian Theology doth ariſe; namely, In the ſtate of *nature's integrity and innocence*, the *love of God* made up the whole of religion; nor was there any other duty incumbent on man, but to *love the Lord his God with all his heart*. Again, in the ſtate of *nature depraved*, and conſidered as it is to be repaired and renewed, the ſame *love of God* ſtill makes the firſt, the chief and capital part of religion, which alone is deſired for itſelf, and for whoſe ſake all the other things belonging to religion are enjoined: ſo that the love of GOD, being compared with the remaining parts of religion, is the end to which they all refer, and lead as ſo many ways and means.

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FOR a more particular and diſtinct explication of this doctrine of Chriſtian Theology, thus ſummarily propoſed, we are in the next place to ſhew how, and in what order, all the other precepts and inſtitutions of religion do reſpect *charity* or the *love of God*, and ſerve for kindling up again that heavenly flame in the hearts of men.

Firſt then, inaſmuch as man had unworthily violated the league of friendſhip into which GOD had vouchſafed to admit him, and by transferring unto the creatures the love and affection that is due to GOD only, had drawn upon himſelf GOD's diſpleaſure, and expoſed himſelf unto eternal death; it was impoſſible that he could be reſtored unto his former ſtate, without the grace and mercy of GOD pardoning his offence, on theſe terms, (and none more eaſy could be either deſired or granted) namely, That man ſhould return to his duty, that is, to the *love of God*; and that for this effect GOD ſhould allow unto man ſuch helps as were neceſſary for that purpoſe.

For obtaining of this mercy the interceſſion of a Mediator was neceſſary; one who might procure this by his merit and favour with GOD. I ſhall not make it my buſineſs here

here to enquire into the cauſes and reaſons why GOD would not be reconciled to fallen man, without the intervention of a Mediator. That he would not, is evident from this, becauſe for want of a mediator the fallen angels were precluded from any acceſs to the grace and favour of GOD: *for he took not on him the nature of angels, but the ſeed of Abraham*, Heb. ii. 16. and the virtue and efficacy of his incarnation, together with what he did and ſuffered in the fleſh, began to take place immediately after man's fall: whence our bleſſed Saviour is called *the Lamb ſlain from the beginning of the world*, Rev. xiii. 8.

To this mean of ſalvation, which is placed without us, and hath no dependence upon us, that which anſwers on our part is love and gratitude to JESUS CHRIST, who became our ſurety to GOD; and faith, whereby we aſcribe to him thoſe hopes of ſalvation that he hath purchaſed for us, and rely on his merits and interceſſion for the pardon of our ſins, the acceptance of our ſervices with GOD, and the obtaining of every thing that is good for us.

Becauſe the pardon which CHRIST procured for fallen man is only conditional,

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and the conditions which GOD requires of us in order to our being reſtored to his favour (namely, that being unfeignedly penitent for our ſins, we ſhould return to GOD and our duty, reſtore unto him the full poſſeſſion of our hearts, and both begin and ever continue to love Him with all our ſoul) are ſuch as they cannot directly, immediately, and at once be performed by us, becauſe of the thick clouds of ignorance, and the corrupt affections wherewith ſin hath filled our minds; therefore ſome means muſt of neceſſity be preſcribed and made uſe of for this end, by which, as by ſteps, we may gradually aſcend to the perfect *love of God*, which is ſeated, as it were, upon the high throne of religion. Such means hath GOD preſcribed in his word, and by ſo doing hath adopted them into the family of religion.

It is clear and evident in itſelf, that in returning to the *love of God* we muſt take a courſe quite contrary to that by which man departed from it. Seeing then man loſt this love of GOD, not by enjoying of nor taking his divertiſement with the creatures (both which he might lawfully do) but by uniting his heart unto them by love; it follows, that if we would have this divine fire to de-

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ſcend upon the altar of our hearts, we muſt of neceſſity extinguiſh and put out the impure and muddy *love of the world*, and of the creatures: for the love of GOD, and the love of the creatures, cannot ſubſiſt together in one and the ſame ſubject, but do mutually expel each other out of the heart of man; *for if any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him*, as St *John* affirmeth, 1 *John* ii. 15. becauſe GOD requires that the heart of man be offered unto him whole and entire: *My ſon*, ſaith he, *give me thy heart*, Prov. xxiii. 26. Nor can he allow a rival with him in man's love: as ſoon as man admits new and ſtrange loves into his heart, GOD forſakes it as polluted and defiled. But ſuch is the good-will and mercy of GOD in CHRIST JESUS towards ſtraying man, that no ſooner is the heart of man offered unto him, pure and void of the love of the creatures, but as ſoon he is willing to re-enter and dwell in it, and to fill it with divine light and joy. And to this mean of recovering the love of GOD do all thoſe precepts of religion belong, which forbid to love, covet or ſeek after the world, its riches, honours, pleaſures, or any created thing.

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Again, as in order to the recovery of the *love of God*, the love of the creatures muſt be laid aſide; ſo likewiſe, that man may be freed from this love of the creatures, it is needful that he abſtain, as much as may be, from the converſe and uſe of the creatures, thoſe eſpecially that are grateful and pleaſing to the fleſh: for ſo unſteady and frail is human nature, ſince it was depraved by ſin, that it cannot view nor enjoy thoſe delights without being inveigled in their love. And therefore it behoveth us, in our food, cloathing, and other means of life, to reſt contented with things neceſſary, and induſtriouſly to avoid ſuch as be delightful to the ſenſual mind.

That which makes this part of our duty the more eaſy, is the curſing of the earth, and the defacement of, at leaſt, this ſublunary world, which by the wiſe and juſt providence of GOD was the conſequence of *Adam*'s fall; by reaſon of which, the world, as it now is, differs as much from what it was before the fall, as a vile dungeon does from a royal and magnificent palace. Concerning this corruption of the world the apoſtle ſpeaks, *Rom.* viii. 20, 21. where he ſays, *The creature was made ſubject to vanity,*

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not willingly; and that *at laſt the creature itſelf ſhall be delivered from the bondage of corruption.* If men be paſſionately in love with this wretched carcaſs of a world, what would they have done, if they had ſeen and poſſeſſed it in its primitive perfection of ſplendor and beauty!

Furthermore, becauſe ſelf-love is no leſs an enemy to the love of GOD, than is that of the other creatures, and does uſually raiſe trophies to itſelf upon the other's ruins, it muſt of neceſſity be put off alſo. And to effectuate this, we muſt keep up a conſtant warfare with our corrupt nature; all whoſe *thoughts*, *counſels* and *deſires*, are by the verdict of GOD himſelf, *Gen.* vi. 5. *only and continually evil.* Whatever it deſires muſt be denied it, and the things for which it hath an averſion muſt be forced upon it. We muſt do nothing to gratify it; but its motions muſt ſtill be reſiſted: to the end that it being brought into ſubjection, may never more obſtruct or retard the operations of GOD's Spirit, renewing man in the heart. And becauſe all theſe things are hard and grievous, and very unacceptable to our corrupt nature, we will never be thoroughly inclined to put them in practice, until the

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mind being duly affected with a ſorrowful ſenſe of ſin, and of its own miſery, do firſt groan under the burden thereof, and aſpire after deliverance from it. And theſe means, which ſerve to extinguiſh the love of the creatures in the hearts of men, are the ſame which CHRIST and his apoſtles do ſo frequently inculcate to us in the holy Scriptures, when they enjoin us *repentance, ſelf-denial, renouncing the world, crucifying of the fleſh, taking up of the croſs, and putting off the old man.*

Moreover, as it is only the gracious and immediate preſence of the Deity, filling the ſoul with light and joy, that can beget therein the true love of GOD, which is the perfection of all religion; ſo the other means of ſalvation do ſpring from a higher and far more noble principle than our nature. For ſeeing the human nature, as it is depraved by ſin, is blind, and ſeeketh itſelf and its own advantages in all things, always and every where; and ſeeing the precepts of religion, of which we are ſpeaking, are moſt unpleaſing and hateful unto it: it is evident that a compliance with them cannot be expected without the aſſiſtance of divine grace; and that, both internal, which acteth upon

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the mind immediately, inſtructing, alluring, perſuading and exciting it; and alſo external, which worketh by the mediation of the outward ſenſes: ſo that as the apoſtle ſays, *It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do*, Phil. ii. 13. For the obtaining of this mean, which is only in GOD's power, there is required on our part continual prayer, and a ready compliance with the inſpirations of the holy Ghoſt. *Aſk*, ſaith our Lord CHRIST, *and ye ſhall receive*, Matt. vii. 7. and, *Grieve not the holy Spirit of God*, ſaith the apoſtle, *Eph.* iv. 30.

But inaſmuch as the inward manifeſtations of the holy Ghoſt do require a calm and compoſed mind; and the ſoft whiſpers, the ſweet and gentle voice of the holy Spirit, teaching and admoniſhing in the bottom of the heart, cannot be heard and obſerved by unregenerate men, becauſe of the obſtreperous noiſe and din of bluſtering and tumultuating paſſions and luſts: therefore it became neceſſary to call in the aſſiſtance of a groſs and corporeal way of teaching, ſuch as might make its way to the mind through the external ſenſes. For this reaſon GOD ſent the Prophets, (to whom he had firſt manifeſted himſelf, partly by viſions repreſented

ſented to their fancies, ſometimes when they ſlept, and ſometimes when they were awake, and partly by a voice, and outward ſigns) that they might warn and admoniſh other men, in his name, concerning thoſe things that belonged to their ſalvation. And whereas, from *Adam*'s fall downwards, mankind growing ſtill worſe, breaking out into divers kinds of ſins, and adding new crimes to their old vices, wandered ſtill farther from GOD; it became expedient, that GOD ſhould warn them of their danger by new advertiſements from time to time, and that he ſhould multiply his precepts according to the diverſity of the ſins whereby men inconſiderately ſtrayed from the way of ſalvation; until at length the wickedneſs of men being riſen to an extraordinary height, and the revelations of the Prophets not being able to put a ſtop thereunto, the only begotten Son of GOD, in his great love to mankind, putting on our mortal nature, with all its infirmities (yet without ſin) vouchſafed to dwell among men, that he might perfectly inſtruct them in all that concerned their ſalvation, and in a frail and mortal body, like that which we bear about with us, might lead ſuch a life as is neceſſarily to

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be led by ALL who ſhall be ſaved: that ſo, by a ſenſible experiment, he might convince us, that a Chriſtian life is not impoſſible to our frailty, when fortified with the aids of divine grace; and finally, laid down his life for expiating the ſins of men.

The whole doctrine of religion, comprehending the diſcourſes and deportment of JESUS CHRIST, together with the revelations of the Prophets and the Apoſtles, is recorded in the ſcriptures, as in public regiſters; that by this means it might be far and near diffuſed throughout the world. The ſcriptures therefore are uſeful for the knowledge of the precepts of religion, and the means of ſalvation.

But tho' all that which men are concerned to know and practiſe, in order to their ſalvation, be ſo fully and plainly delivered in the ſcriptures, that all, who are deſirous to learn them, may, with a due application, eaſily there diſcover them: yet there be many who do not apply themſelves to the reading of the ſcriptures; many who, blinded with prejudice, are ſlow to underſtand that which they do read; others are remiſs and negligent in performing what they do underſtand; and even they, who have begun to

tread in the paths of life, do many times through inadvertency ſtep aſide, or by the violence of temptations are hurried away into the way of ſin, and, being once fallen into it, do ſleep ſecurely in it. To remedy which evils, miniſters were appointed, whoſe office it is to inſtruct, admoniſh, reprove and conſole. Religious Societies of Chriſtians were inſtituted, as uſeful for this end, that Chriſtians might be helpful to one another, in promoting the common work of their ſalvation, by inſtructing the ignorant, reclaiming ſuch as do err from the truth; raiſing up thoſe that are caſt down, quickning the lukewarm; rebuking thoſe that commit ſin, and avoiding ſuch as be contumacious. And religious aſſemblies, and alſo public worſhip, were inſtituted, that every thing might be done decently and in order, and that communion might be kept up, and peace and concord maintained among Chriſtians, to the promoting of faith and true holineſs.

Thus have I, link by link, turned over the whole chain of religion, beginning at the higheſt degree thereof, namely, THE LOVE OF GOD, which alone is ſought and enjoined for itſelf; deſcending from this to the

the immediate means whereby it is attained, and from them to ſuch as be more remote, until at laſt we come to the moſt remote of all. This account, which I have given of religion, furniſhes us with a key whereby any one, that is but indifferently verſed in theological ſtudies, may eaſily diſcover what place each part holds in the chriſtian religion; how one part ſtands related to other parts, as a mean to the end; and to ſuch as are below it, as the end to the means: and in what degree of neceſſity, or uſefulneſs, every part ought to be held. But, for the ſake of beginners, I ſhall propoſe one or more of thoſe things in this ſtate of the chriſtian religion, that deſerve the greateſt conſideration.

The firſt is, the remarkable difference between *charity*, or the *love of God*, and all the other parts of religion: among which it hath the pre-eminence, becauſe it alone is deſired for itſelf, and all the reſt are inſtituted for its ſake; that, by their means and ſubſerviency, mankind, which was fallen from the pure and chaſte love of GOD, into the ſtrange and adulterous love of the creatures, may again be reduced to the love which they owe unto GOD. And thus cha-

rity is related to the other parts of religion, as the end is to the means; agreeable to the apoſtle's plain inſtruction, *The end of the commandment is charity*, 1 Tim. i. 5. Now, as the wooden frames and ſcaffolds that are uſed in building, are taken away when the work is ended, they being then no longer uſeful; ſo when the *love of God* ſhall be perfected in the hearts of thoſe that are to be ſaved, then miniſters, public worſhip, even the holy ſcriptures, the renouncing of the world, the mortifying of the fleſh, repentance, faith, and all the other parts of religion that are diſtinct from charity, ſhall ceaſe: as the ſame apoſtle teacheth us, 1 *Cor.* xiii. 8,10,13. *Charity*, ſaith he, *never faileth: but whether there be prophecies, they ſhall fail; whether there be tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; whether there be knowledge, it ſhall vaniſh away. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part ſhall be done away. Now abideth faith, hope, charity; but the greateſt of theſe is charity.*

Another thing that is to be diligently obſerved in this ſtate of the chriſtian religion, concerneth thoſe parts that are diſtinct from charity, their difference as they ſtand related to it, as to their end. And in this reſpect they

they are claſſed in a three-fold difference. They are all means for recovering charity. But, firſt, ſome of them are neceſſary, and withal ſure and infallible: others, ſecondly, are indeed uſeful, but not ſure and infallible: and others, thirdly, that are neither ſure nor neceſſary in any particular form or mode. In the firſt rank are, faith in JESUS CHRIST the Mediator, (where the goſpel is known) repentance, the mortifying of the corrupt nature, or the old man; the renouncing of the world, with all its pomps and vanities; and, finally, the weaning of the heart from the impure love of the world and all the creatures; which being once rooted out, the love of GOD ſucceeds, and is kindled up and ſhed abroad in the heart by the HOLY GHOST. All theſe be indiſpenſably neceſſary for recovering the love of GOD, and they have a ſure and infallible mediate or immediate connection therewith. In the ſecond rank ſtand the holy ſcriptures; which, for reaſons already expreſſed, are uſeful, that men may attain to the knowledge of ſuch things as it concerns them to know and practiſe, in order to their ſalvation. But is not ſo to be underſtood, as if thoſe who were once well acquainted with the doctrine

of religion delivered in the holy ſcriptures, could not afterwards live a chriſtian life without thoſe ſacred books: for, as *Auguſtine* writes in his treatiſe of *Chriſtian Doctrine*, lib. i. chap. 39. " As a man grounded in " faith, hope and charity, and retaining " them ſtedfaſtly, needs not the ſcriptures, " except it be for the inſtruction of others; " thus by theſe three many live in the de- " ſart without books. Whence I think " that in them is fulfilled that ſaying, *Whe-* " *ther there be prophecies, they ſhall fail; or* " *tongues, they ſhall ceaſe; or knowledge, it* " *ſhall be deſtroyed*, &c." But though the ſcriptures be uſeful in the degree I have mentioned, yet they are not ſure and infallible means of ſalvation; ſeeing very many of thoſe who have them, and read them daily, come ſhort of it; not for any fault in the ſcriptures, but in the perſons themſelves, who take no care to order their lives and manners according to the preſcripts in them delivered.

In the third rank of means of ſalvation, which are neither neceſſary in any particular form or mode, nor ſure, are included miniſters of religious ſocieties, and public worſhip; and if there be any other means inſtituted

inſtituted by GOD for this end, that men may be excited to learn, or keep in mind, or practiſe the duties of religion, that are fully and clearly delivered in the ſcriptures. That theſe have no ſure and infallible connection with the ſalvation of men, is more evident than to want either proof or illuſtration. And although Chriſtians ought not to neglect or deſpiſe, but to make uſe of them when they can be had, as well becauſe in the right uſe of them many excellent advantages may be reaped; yet this will not make them indiſpenſably neceſſary to ſalvation: for it is certain, that ſuch as have the ſcriptures, if they carefully and diligently peruſe them, may both diſcover the way of ſalvation marked out in them; and having found it, may begin to walk in it; and, by the aſſiſtance of GOD's grace, may conſtantly perſevere therein, until at laſt they work out their ſalvation: although they live in ſuch a corner of the world where they have no opportunities, either of preachers, whom they may hear; or of chriſtian ſocieties, to which they may join themſelves. Of this we have notable inſtances in ſome of the hermits, who have deſervedly ob-

tained a great reputation for piety in the church of CHRIST.

HAVING laid down the general idea of this Theology, together with the more diſtinct and particular explication thereof, I come now to the many and weighty propoſitions, and rules, and concluſions which may be deduced from this doctrine. And indeed ſo various and manifold is the uſe of this pure and peaceable Theology (which I have already explained) both in a private life, and alſo for the right ordering of all the religious ſocieties of Chriſtians; it abounds with ſo many uſeful rules and inſtructions for every kind of life, that it would be hard to reckon up all that might be deduced from it by ſerious and attentive meditation. I ſhall inſtance only in a few, for a trial.

Firſt then it plainly appears, that the precepts of the Chriſtian religion have proceeded neither from the mere arbitrary will of GOD, nor from his wrath and diſpleaſure; but from love, favour and good-will toward fallen man. And the reaſon why GOD hath impoſed the laws of repentance, ſelf-denial, and the renouncing of the world, as neceſ-

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ſary to be obſerved by all that would be ſaved, is not that he might exerciſe his authority over men, or be avenged on them; but becauſe there is no other ſafe and ſecure way of raiſing them to a true and laſting happineſs, beſides that which the precepts of religion do preſcribe. GOD might indeed, by virtue of his omnipotence, have reſtored man, who was fallen into ſin and miſery, unto his original holy and happy ſtate, without the intervention of a medicinal penitence. But recent experience, and the notable inſtance of inſtability and inconſtancy which *Adam* had given, do evidently diſcover that nothing was to be expected this way; but that *Adam*, having lightly eſcaped ſo great a danger, would probably have been the more preſumptuous to offend again; or, if his experience had made him more cautious and wary, yet his children might readily have elapſed into his ſin and miſery. So that if this method had been taken for recovering fallen man, it is probable that none of them would have been ſaved by it. For this reaſon it was more agreeable, both to the wiſdom and goodneſs of GOD, to grant unto fallen man the means of returning unto his firſt ſtate of happineſs.

by the way of penitence only; which, tho' it be the more painful, yet it is the moſt ſafe and infallible. For as thoſe who come to great fortunes, either by ſucceſſion to their parents, or by the bounty of their prince, are more probably inclined to ſquander away their wealth, than others who have acquired riches by their own induſtry and labour, after they have felt the pinching difficulties of want and poverty; ſo it is not to be doubted, but thoſe men who have with difficulty wreſtled out of the deep gulf of ſin and miſery, and have come to happineſs by the rough, uneaſy and narrow way of penitence, will prove far more conſtant in the love of their Creator, and more firm and reſolute in ſuſtaining and repelling the aſſaults of temptations, than was either *Adam*, who was created in a ſtate of felicity, or than his poſterity would have been, in caſe that happineſs had been by ſucceſſion tranſmitted unto them from *Adam*.

If it ſhould here be enquired, Might not GOD have reſtored man immediately after his fall; and, having reſtored, confirmed him alſo in grace and holineſs, and put him out of all danger of falling again any more, ſo as that he ſhould not have been afterward

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obnoxious unto ſin, no more than the glorious angels? I anſwer, That a confirmed ſtate of grace and holineſs is both the fruit and reward of a previous and tried conſtancy and firmneſs in the love of GOD: that it was granted upon no other conditions to the angels, who perſiſted in their duty and fidelity; nor would have been given unto *Adam*, ſuppoſe he had not ſinned, till after a competent time of trial faithfully ſpent in the love of GOD: finally, that it is not poſſible that a reaſonable creature can attain to a conſummated ſtate of perfection by any other way than GOD has appointed, without infringing its liberty, which GOD will have preſerved ſafe and inviolate.

For ſuch is the nature of liberty, that without hurt and prejudice to itſelf, it cannot allow that any of the faculties that are under its conduct, eſpecially the will, ſhould be determined by any other principle than itſelf, in their application to this rather than the other ſuitable object, after this rather than the other manner. Nevertheleſs it will ſuffer itſelf to be fixed and bound, either to good or evil, by cords of its own making. Such are the habits contracted by long and continued exerciſes of the acts of love, de-

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ſire, complacency, enjoyment, and the like, upon the ſame objects: whereby a man finds himſelf puſhed forward to the love, deſire and enjoyment of thoſe objects; and drawn back when he offers to ſeparate and withdraw his affections from them; ſo that, without difficulty and violence done to himſelf, he cannot abſtain from the acts unto which ſuch habits do diſpoſe him, no more than exerciſe the contrary: which hath given riſe to that vulgar maxim, "Cuſtom is a "ſecond nature."

This is plain and undeniable in the caſe of evil habits, that are ſo common and ordinary. For who does not know that a glutton, a drunkard, or a laſcivious perſon, for example, are ſo enſlaved to thoſe vicious habits and luſts which they ſerve, that they cannot, without great difficulty and much ſtruggling, refrain from ſatiating their ſenſual deſires and appetites, when they have it in their power; nor be reclaimed from their diſſolute converſation, to a ſober, a temperate and a chaſte converſation? This the prophet *Jeremiah* doth ſignificantly expreſs, when he ſaith, *Can the Ethiopian change his colour, or the leopard his ſpots? then may*

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ye alſo do good, who are accuſtomed to do evil, Jer. xiii. 23.

Nor is there leſs force and efficacy in good habits, which are contracted by a long courſe of good actions, performed by the power of the holy Ghoſt, whereby the old man is ſubdued and mortified, the new quickned and advanced by degrees, till in the end he becomes a perfect man. For when any perſon is once come this length, he becomes ready, forward and inclined to do good; ſlow, backward and averſe to evil: as St *John* inſtructs us, *Whoſoever is born of God doth not commit ſin; for the ſeed of God abideth in him, and he cannot ſin, becauſe he is born of God,* 1 John iii. 9.

After that theſe good or evil habits have received their proper and ſuitable improvements from GOD, that is, after he has fortified and eſtabliſhed the good by renewed meaſures and communications of his grace, and has repeatedly endeavoured to reclaim the evil, and all to no purpoſe; when he reſolves that the graces of his Spirit ſhall not be any more proſtituted to the ſcorn and contempt of thoſe who are rooted in ſin; and when he rewards the godly, for the good uſe that they have made of their liberty,

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with plentiful meaſures of grace, and takes the government of their free-will (after they have freely reſigned it) into his own hands: then follows the final, unchangeable and endleſs obduration of the wicked in ſin, and the eſtabliſhment of the godly in grace and holineſs. Whence it appears, that rational free creatures can neither be eſtabliſhed in a ſtate of grace, nor hardened into a ſtate of ſin, without infringing their liberty, except by the free uſe and exerciſe thereof in good or evil.

Secondly, This Theology diſcovers the ground of that which the apoſtle delivers 1 *Cor.* xiii. where he declares, that thoſe parts of religion which are commonly moſt eſteemed among men, (ſuch are, much knowledge in divine things, orthodoxy, faith, and ſuffering of perſecution for the true religion, even unto death) will be unprofitable to ſalvation without *charity:* becauſe theſe, and all other things pertaining to religion, are for this end ordained and enjoined by GOD, that by them men may be brought to *charity*, or the *love of God*; ſo that if they do not attain to that end, they become vain and unprofitable. Wherefore they are far deceived, who conceive good hopes, and entertain

tertain a good opinion of themſelves, and of their own ſpiritual condition, becauſe they do belong to this or the other party of Chriſtians; becauſe they are diligent and aſſiduous in hearing, reading, praying and communicating; all theſe being too weak ſupporters whereon to build a ſolid hope of ſalvation. For unleſs men will denounce war againſt their corrupt nature, renounce the world, and deny themſelves, they ſhall never recover the *true and ſincere love of God*; and, without the unfeigned *love of God*, they ſhall never come to his preſence, nor to the dwelling-place of the bleſſed.

Thirdly, This Theology teacheth us how to diſtinguiſh between the eſſential or fundamental principles of religion, and thoſe that are not fundamental. And here I take the eſſence of religion not ſtrictly, for all that which belongeth to religion, always, and in all ſtates, (in which ſenſe the *love of God* alone makes up the whole eſſence of religion) but more largely, for all thoſe things which are neceſſary or uſeful for men, conſidered in a ſtate of corrupt nature, that they may be fitted for and brought into the enjoyment of eternal happineſs. Now, whereas ſome parts of religion are means of

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ſalvation, both neceſſary, ſure and infallible; others uſeful, but not ſure; and others that may be means of ſalvation, but neither ſure nor neceſſary in any particular form or mode: it is evident that the precepts and inſtitutions of the third claſs do by no means belong to the tribe of the fundamentals of religion. Moreover, becauſe a fundamental of religion, properly ſo called, is that, the knowledge whereof is neceſſary to ſalvation, directly and of itſelf; and all the precepts and inſtitutions of the firſt claſs, and they only, are ſuch: from this it does appear, that the whole family of the fundamentals of religion is contained within the limits of the firſt claſs. But becauſe men cannot by any other outward means come to the certain knowledge of the fundamentals of religion, ſo well as by the ſcriptures; therefore, to know the ſcriptures, and to acknowledge them for a ſure rule of faith, may be called a ſecondary principle of religion.

Fourthly, This Theology teacheth alſo the difference of errors; that ſome are damnable and pernicious, ſome dangerous only, and ſome harmleſs. All thoſe errors, touching faith and religion, which do neceſſarily ſubvert ſome fundamental principle of religion,

gion, and that in the opinion and judgment of the erring perſon; or that cannot ſubſiſt at the ſame time, and in the ſame mind with the belief of the fundamental principles of religion: theſe, and theſe only, are to be looked upon as deſtructive and damnable; and, as ſuch, are with great care and diligence to be expelled out of all ſocieties of chriſtians. For the chriſtian religion is like a bridge, by which alone men can go from this valley of miſeries to the bleſſed regions of light and peace; and the fundamental principles of religion are as ſo many arches, which, joined and united together, do make up this bridge: and therefore thoſe errors that do overturn any of the fundamental principles of religion, do, as it were, cut out an arch from the bridge; whereby a breach is made in it, and the paſſage by it unto heaven is obſtructed.

Again, thoſe errors are to be avoided, as dangerous, whoſe tendency is to make men remiſs and negligent in the buſineſs of their ſalvation. But thoſe errors may be harmleſs, whereby a Chriſtian, who is in the way of ſalvation, is neither let nor retarded in his courſe. Such was the error of *Irenæus*, who

who writes, " that our Saviour was fifty " years old when he ſuffered."

From hence, in the fifth place, we may draw rules and principles for directing not only private Chriſtians, how far they may entertain or refuſe external communion with the different ſects and ſocieties of Chriſtians, into which the outward unity of chriſtian ſocieties is miſerably divided and rent aſunder; but thoſe alſo who are appointed by each ſociety to take care that the rules and regulations directed for the good order thereof, be obſerved by the reſpective members. For whereas the end and deſign of chriſtian ſocieties is, that by their help every private Chriſtian may be forwarded in a courſe of piety, and aſſiſted in working out their ſalvation; it is plain, firſt, That a Chriſtian, who lays the work of his ſalvation to heart, ought to join himſelf unto, and aſſociate with thoſe chriſtian ſocieties wherein he apprehends the beſt helps to piety are to be found. Next, that he muſt abſtain from the communion of thoſe chriſtian ſocieties whoſe fellowſhip, he conceives, is apt to hinder or retard his progreſs in true piety; either becauſe the purity of the chriſtian doctrine is, to his apprehenſion, therein corrupted

rupted with evil principles, and ſuch as flatter corrupt nature; or the force and efficacy of ſound and wholeſome doctrine is impaired and enervated by the miſchievous examples of a worldly life; or, finally, becauſe he thinks the privilege of communion is annexed to ſomething that is unlawful, as a neceſſary condition thereof. Thirdly, That the communion of that ſociety of chriſtians, whereof he is a member already, and whoſe fellowſhip, though it be little uſeful to piety, yet is not prejudicial to it, may be continued in, in caſe it cannot be forſaken without ſome great inconvenience.

For the ſame reaſon alſo it becomes the duty of all thoſe who are promoted to take the care and management of the affairs of chriſtian ſocieties, to make uſe of the power they are entruſted with, for edification of the people, and not for their deſtruction; not enjoining any thing that is not conducive to Chriſtians in their advancement in true piety, nor requiring any thing, as a neceſſary condition of external communion, which any ſober perſon in his right mind, and who is acted by a ſerious and ſincere deſire after holineſs, cannot perform with a good conſcience, leſt they chance to debar from the

external

external communion of their ſociety, thoſe whom CHRIST hath honoured with inward and ſpiritual communion with himſelf, and with the ſaints, that is, with the inviſible church of CHRIST; and, finally, conſtraining no perſons, againſt their mind and conſcience, to an external communion with any ſociety, however eſtabliſhed by human laws.

In this corollary we may behold, as in a glaſs, the deplorable ſtate of the chriſtian world at this day, wherein almoſt every ſect of Chriſtians, at leaſt the ruling part among them, do require the belief and profeſſion of their peculiar and diſtinguiſhing doctrines (which are ſome of them obſcure, others doubtful and uncertain, and others falſe) as a neceſſary condition of communion; ſowing by this means the ſeeds of diſcord and diviſion, and hatred among Chriſtians, inſtead of that UNITY, and LOVE, and CONCORD, which our Saviour ſo earneſtly recommended to his diſciples. Nor is this all; but they do what in them lies to force all others, by mulcts, baniſhments, and corporal puniſhments, to embrace their communion, and to fulfil the conditions thereof: and by ſo doing, inſtead of making men Chriſtians, they only make them hypocrites;

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of all ſinners the moſt hateful in the ſight of GOD.

Laſt of all, From this pure and peaceable Theology does plainly appear, that the particular form or mode of government of chriſtian ſocieties, is not ſuch a mean of recovering the *love of God*, as is either neceſſary, or ſure and infallible; and conſequently, that it is not a fundamental principle, nor an eſſential part of the chriſtian religion. This is a matter that ought to be well conſidered by all Chriſtians, but eſpecially by thoſe among whom bitter envyings, and ſtrifes, and contentions are kept up, diſcord and tumults are raiſed, animoſities and hatred are exerciſed about particular forms of government and diſcipline; to the great reproach of chriſtianity, the ſcandal of the weak, and the woful decay, or (ſhall I ſay) the utter ruin and ſubverſion of true piety. How much better were it, and more conducive to the honour of the chriſtian religion, to piety and to peace, that Chriſtians ſhould rather exerciſe a mutual forbearance in this caſe, by allowing every one free liberty to think, and ſpeak, and act as they pleaſe, in theſe and other ſuch like matters, that are remote from the centre of religion;

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concerning which ſincere lovers of truth and holineſs may differ in their judgments, and that without any prejudice to mutual love and the duties of charity, either among ſingle perſons, or among the ſocieties of chriſtians.

FROM all that has been ſaid, the notable uſe and neceſſity of this pure and peaceable Theology does abundantly appear. For he who does not underſtand the various and differing reſpects and relations of the ſeveral parts of religion among themſelves (which this Theology teaches) cannot but often ſtumble and fall, and wander in his way to eternal life. For either,

Firſt, He will conſider all the parts of religion as equal, and ſtanding upon the ſame level; and ſo will apply himſelf to them indifferently, without order or choice, practiſing now one duty, then another, as his inclinations or circumſtances ſhall prompt him: not unlike to an unſkilful huſbandman, that ſhould take much pains in ſowing, digging, tilling, harrowing, *&c.* his ground, without any regard to the order or ſeaſon that ought to be obſerved therein. For as this man would unavoidably fall ſhort of the hoped for reward of his labours,

I mean, of a plentiful harveſt; ſo the other would infallibly loſe the fruit and reward of a religious converſation, namely, regeneration and eternal life. Now, I make no doubt but there are many ſuch to be found among the profeſſors of chriſtianity, who, conſidering only what is common to all the parts and precepts of their religion, namely, the ſtamp of divine authority, and not adverting to the proper and peculiar aims of every one of them in particular, do keep a mighty ſtir, and are much taken up about religion to little purpoſe, without making any conſiderable progreſs in it: like the men of *Sodom*, who, *being ſmitten with blindneſs, wearied themſelves in vain to find the door* of *Lot*'s houſe; and ſeem to be pointed out by the apoſtle, under the figure of *ſilly women, who are ever learning, and never able to come to the* (ſaving and practical) *knowledge of the truth.* Or,

Secondly, He will prefer the leſſer and lighter matters of religion to ſuch as be greater and more weighty; with which our Saviour upbraids the ſcribes and Phariſees, who *paid tithes of mint, cummin and aniſe*; but *neglected the weightier things of the law, judgment, mercy and truth:* a fault whereof the

the greater part of Chriſtians are guilty, who put a greater value upon a right belief and perſuaſion touching things leſs neceſſary, (ſuch as are almoſt all the diſtinguiſhing doctrines of every ſect of Chriſtians, together with ſome religious rites and particular rules and forms of diſcipline and government, much controverted in theſe times; concerning which a man may think and act thus or otherwiſe, provided he act not againſt his conſcience, without prejudice to his ſalvation) than they do upon holineſs of heart and life, without which no man ſhall ſee GOD, *Heb.* xii. 14. being leſs ſolicitous for this than the other. For as in their own practice they ſtudy more to be orthodox than to be humble, charitable, mortified to the world, and ſelf-denied; ſo they do with open arms receive into their communion all that do agree with them in doctrine and worſhip, be their lives never ſo ſenſual and worldly; but do exclude, as aliens and ſtrangers, all ſuch as differ from them in theſe matters, be their lives otherwiſe never ſo harmleſs and holy; ſeeking rather to gain diſciples and followers to their own way and party, than to CHRIST and his religion: who, if with the proſelytes of the ſcribes and

Phariſees

Phariſees they grow not worſe, yet will certainly get little more by their change, than an exchange of opinions, and of the modes and circumſtances of external worſhip.

They alſo ſplit upon this ſame rock, who, neglecting the capital virtues of the Chriſtian religion, take up their reſt in the means ſubſervient thereunto; ſuch as are the ſcriptures, ſermons, ſacraments, and the like; whoſe uſe is, to inſtruct men in the eſſential duties of religion, to ſtir them up to, and aſſiſt them in, the performance of them. In which we may obſerve many to be much employed; who do think, that in ſo doing they have reaſonably well diſcharged their duty as Chriſtians, though they never aſpire after humility, the mortification of the fleſh, the renouncing of the world, and the love of GOD, and their neighbour; for the ſake of which, all thoſe other things, wherewith they are ſo much taken up, were purely intended and appointed: not a whit wiſer than one who, intending a journey to ſome remote country or city, ſhould employ all his time and care in providing and viewing of horſes, chariots, ſervants, proviſions, and other neceſſaries for a journey; and in the

mean time never ſtir a foot from home, to ſet forward on the journey. Or,

They will ſlight and neglect the inferior miniſtring and ſubſervient parts and duties of religion, and ſeek to come at thoſe of the higheſt rank and degree without them: with no better ſucceſs, than if a man ſhould endeavour to get up to the top of a high tower without the help of the ſtairs that lead to it, by throwing out his arms, ſtraining his body, and ſtanding on tip-toe. And this fault is but too common among Chriſtians, who imagine they can attain to the internal virtues of contrition, humility, contempt of the world, ſelf-denial, the love of GOD, *&c.* by meditation and thinking only, without practiſing the external good works that diſpoſe and lead thereunto, and without avoiding the allurements and temptations to the contrary vices; ſuch as be riches, honours, pleaſures, and the familiarity and friendſhip of worldly-minded men: acting in this with as little colour of reaſon, as one, who, being ſhut up in a dark priſon, or plunged in ſnow up to the chin, ſhould expect to be enlightned and warmed by the mere force of his imagination, without coming forth into the bright and warm ſun.

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To theſe we may add ſome others, who boaſt of inward manifeſtations of the Spirit, communion with GOD, ſpiritual joys, and ſuch like rewards and comforts of a pure heart; although they have not as yet purged out the old leaven of carnal luſts and earthly affections: embracing the ſhadow for the ſubſtance.

On the contrary, he who is acquainted with the doctrine of this pure and peaceable Theology, and will chooſe to follow it, he conſiders charity, or the *love of God*, as the great end, and the other duties and virtues belonging to the chriſtian religion, as the means appointed for attaining thereunto: and accordingly he makes the firſt his great aim and buſineſs, and the reſt he regards and uſes only in conſideration of their ſubſerviency to this firſt. He reads the ſcriptures, hears ſermons, receives the ſacrament, and performs other ſubſervient duties of religion, not that he may reſt in them, but that by their means he may be ſtirred up and helped forward to the contempt of himſelf and the world, and to the love of GOD, and of his neighbour for GOD's ſake; knowing that all the labour that is laid out that way is loſt, if it do not contribute to this

end. And as though eating and drinking are the neceſſary means of life and health, and yet men muſt not be always eating and drinking, but muſt allow ſome time for digeſtion; ſo he obſerves a mediocrity in reading the ſcriptures, hearing ſermons, *&c.*

There is no help to piety, how mean and contemptible ſoever it may appear, which he either contemns in his own practice, or condemns in another's: yet he is not ſo much wedded to any external means, but that he can lay them aſide, in caſe that through long uſe, or rather abuſe, they are become unprofitable or hurtful; as was the brazen ſerpent. He is neither ſo fond nor ſo afraid of any religious rite, ceremony, or cuſtom, that is innocent, and, being indifferent in itſelf, may be uſed for a good end, but he can either uſe or abſtain from it, as the peace of the ſociety, or the edification of his neighbour does require: herein imitating the apoſtle, who *to the Jews became as a Jew, that he might gain the Jews; to them that were under the law, as under the law, that he might gain them that were under the law; to them that were without law, as without law, that he might gain them that were without law. To the weak he became as weak, that*

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he might gain the weak. Finally, *he was made all things unto all men, that he might by all means ſave ſome,* 1 Cor. ix. 20, *&c.*

The neceſſary fundamental truths of religion he finds to be but few; to which he adheres, and lays them up carefully in his heart: but is leſs taken with the reſt; concerning which he loves not to debate with any perſon; well knowing, that as few controverſies are ever ended this way, ſo the minds of men are thereby diverted from the ſtudy of holineſs, and hatred, animoſity, diviſions and perſecutions are begotten and fomented; and that a further progreſs and advancement in the ſaving knowledge of the truth is better attained by holy living, than by much diſputing. He maintains an inward ſpiritual communion of love and affection with all that truly fear GOD, and ſincerely ſeek him, however much they may differ from him, and among themſelves, concerning the matters of religion that are leſs neceſſary; being ready to entertain external communion with them, ſo far as the terms and conditions of external communion which they require, will allow, and ſo far as they do not obſtruct the love of GOD, and the mortifying of our corrupt nature: but carefully

avoids the company and familiarity of all wicked and worldly-minded men, as hurtful and contagious, although they agree with him in the profeſſion of the ſame doctrine and outward worſhip.

To the all-good, all-wiſe, and almighty Lord our GOD, Father, Son, and holy Spirit, be praiſe and glory for ever. *Amen.*

OF

NATURAL REASON

AND

DIVINE FAITH.

SHEWING

They proceed from two different and distinct principles in MAN.

E A C E

THE

PREFACE.

I Have ſomething peculiar to ſay of this work, the contents of which ſo much concern the preſent age, that there ſcarcely will be a perſon into whoſe hands it ſhall fall, that will not find himſelf intereſted in the points treated of, and he muſt judge whether the method I have taken be not more ſatisfactory than what is uſually offered.

Chriſt being the power of God, by which the holy Spirit renews the image of God in man, and reſtores him to that primitive dignity and perfection from which he has fallen by ſin, that after his regeneration, and becoming a new creature, he may enjoy a bleſſed and glorious immortality; the good or evil of writings, doctrines, and actions, is to be meaſured according as they are truly ſubſervient, or hurtful to the promoting this great end; and there being ſome errors extremely dangerous that are eaſily embraced by men, I ſhall mention ſome of them, which ſeem to have the moſt malignant influence in this iſland.

And the firſt I ſhall mention is, that fundamental and principal error of denying the ori-

ginal corruption of man's nature, or that we derive from our parents a corrupt and depraved nature, wholly degenerated from what it was when it first came from God: and on the other hand affirming, that the human nature is much the same now that it was when first formed; and that also the powers and faculties of the mind are also the same; that sin has made but very little change in man; and that he remains much the same as before the fall of Adam, *with the same faculties, the same strength, and the same powers; that it is a mere fancy to imagine man is now born so weak, so corrupt, and so dead in sin, that the inward grace and operation of the Spirit of God only can recover him; for that reason is sufficient to preserve man in his integrity to God, without the help of any inward and operating grace infused immediately by the Spirit of God into the soul.*

Some say, that all the actions of man, good and evil, are predetermined by God from all eternity: nay, that he produces and determines in time, all the actions of his creatures; but in such a manner, that man's will is not constrained, but that man must infallibly sin voluntarily, so that all the fault and blame shall lie on him. This others, not without reason, do esteem a horrible blasphemy, and to exceed the malice

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and wickedneſs of devils and the worſt of men, which never came to that height of impiety as to ſay, God diſpoſes even good men to ſin, and to ordain all concurring circumſtances, ſo that they may fall; yea and to do in man the act that conſtitutes the ſin, but yet ſo dextrouſly and artificially, as that they who are the chief agents do remain innocent, while the man only is guilty.

Man of neceſſity muſt have been endued with a free will, a power of determining himſelf, at leaſt before ſin was committed, elſe there could have been no ſin. For if all had been determined by God, namely, the end man was to aim at, the means to come by it, all the circumſtances and the moſt inward principle by which he was to act, yea, and the act itſelf; man could not ſin in tending to an end, by ways, means, and circumſtances, determined by God: or if there were evil in it, God would be the cauſe of it, which is impious. Since then man actually did evil, he had liberty and free will; and ſince man continues to do evil, he muſt ſtill have the ſame free will; and the acts and circumſtances of this free will, cannot be determined by God, for the very ſame reaſon, that there then would be no evil in it, or God would be the author of it.

This free will every man is conſcious of; and if any ſpeak otherwiſe with his mouth, his heart and actions muſt give him the lie. All mens dealings with one another, and God's dealing with them, do ſuppoſe in man this free principle, by which he may determine himſelf as he pleaſes, and that there is a principle in man, upon which no impreſſion but that of his own choice, does impoſe a neceſſity of acting.

This power is granted him, becauſe his nature is of a divine original, God's offspring, and he was made after the image of God; becauſe God would have the gift to be mutual between him and man; and as he united himſelf to man freely, out of pure choice, and in a moſt generous manner; ſo he would have man cleave to God out of choice, freely, and in a generous manner, without any conſtraint, or foreign determination, becauſe he would be loved by man, with a true, noble, ſincere, and free love.

Some ſay, that God has given man free will as to civil and worldly things, but not as to divine and ſpiritual things. And yet free will is the moſt divine of all advantages; and therefore muſt be with reſpect to ſpiritual, as to temporal things.

Man's free will is not the cauſe of the faculties he has, nor that they naturally ſpring after light and love; nor that they are active

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and produce acts; nor that he has a choice and the liberty of his faculties; nor that by turning them towards their natural object, which is God, the act of illumination and of love follows in them. All this comes from God, and man brings nothing but an occasional act which God requires of him, after having given him the power to produce it. This doctrine of man's free will vindicates the divine justice and goodness, and serves to animate and encourage man, in the strength of God's grace, to exert that moral power that God hath given him to overcome his evil habits and inclinations, and to do violence to his corrupt nature, and to strive vigorously to enter in at the strait gate: whereas the contrary doctrine does most blasphemously make God the author of evil, by fatally determining man's will in all things; and gives sinful man occasion to excuse himself in all his sins, as being necessitated to them by the will of God; and also encourages man in his stupid sloth and slumber.

The doctrine of man's free will is not inconsistent with that of the divine grace, but they mutually strengthen one another. God prevents man by his grace, by his calls and warnings, by good motions, and knockings at the door of his heart; and if he answers it, God accom-

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panies man's consent and attention with more grace; and so proceeds by his grace to purify and possess the soul.

All that the divine Being has made man's duty to be, is this, That as the soul of man is free, and has it in its power to choose as it will; to turn to this or that; to admit this or the other; or not to admit; and that more or less, as it pleases; that the free will of man turn away his desires from all that is not God, and comply with the good motions God by his grace works in the mind, and bring the desires of his heart, and offer it, and all that belongs to it, wholly to God; for God will then do all the rest. But if man does not this, God will never supply this defect and obstinacy. This is man's duty, and his indispensable work, which he cannot neglect, without ruining himself to all eternity. There is nothing more true, nothing more important in the world than this. This is the kernel and quintessence of true religion, and the true worship that God requires from men, which all the series of the divine providence, and divine revelation, do proclaim and speak out.

There is a real, living, certain, luminous, operative, satisfying, and solid knowledge of things; and there is a speculative, dry, barren,

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and ſuperficial knowledge of God and of divine things; and that is when either they who have had ſome degree of the living knowledge of God and of divine things, and thereby alſo their moral reaſon and faculty has been enlightened with ideas of divine things, do preſently turn away their dependence upon God, and give up themſelves to the ſpeculations of their reaſon, and of the forming of ideas; and by comparing them together, draw inferences and concluſions of things divine. Or when they who were never thus enlightened, and have only received that manifeſtation of the Spirit that is given to every man to profit withal, do give themſelves up to follow the activity of their reaſon; or upon the reading the writings of thoſe who have been divinely inſpired, to excite men to turn the deſire of their ſouls unto God, do, inſtead of obeying thoſe directions for obtaining the true light, immediately ſet about with their blind minds to form ideas of divine truths, in which they differ as much from one another, and from the truth, as blind men do about the ideas of light and colours; they paſs their time in vain amuſements, either with comparing what others have ſaid, or in what ſenſe ſuch and ſuch words are to be underſtood; and being full of themſelves, and of their own learning,

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they render themſelves incapable of the light of God; and their hearts become hard, and unfit for the divine unction, and the divine love. They contemn and deſpiſe others who are not ſo learned and ſo knowing as they; they become ſtiff and peremptory in their opinions, and with averſion to thoſe who differ from them, count them enemies to God and to his truth.

The intereſt of religion, and the dignity of the human nature, have ſuffered ſo much of late, that it may not be altogether unneceſſary to publiſh ſomething to rectify our notions about ſuch noble and important ſubjects, as the powers of reaſon, or the active underſtanding of the outward man; and of the divine underſtanding of the inward, through the grace of divine faith. And to ſhew that they proceed from two different and diſtinct principles in man; and if at firſt ſight it ſhould appear to any reader, that ſome things are rather ſingular, and uncommon, it is hoped that upon an impartial peruſal it will appear there is nothing advanced out of a ſpirit of novelty, or that is not altogether agreeable with the principles and doctrines of chriſtianity.

Of NATURAL REASON And DIVINE FAITH.

NOTHING, ſurely, can be more deplorable, than to ſee and obſerve the ignorance, the diviſions and the diſtractions of mankind; nothing can be matter of greater concern to all ſober, ſerious and good men, than to ſee how univerſally the world is governed and ſwayed in their judgments and opinions by the moſt ſelfiſh motives, ſuch as honour, intereſt, paſſion, prejudice, &c. This is what every body ſees and obſerves, and what all honeſt and good men juſtly complain of, and very ſincerely lament: but withal it is that, againſt which few, very few, have hitherto been able to find out and preſcribe any ſovereign and ſpecific remedy.

Some have had recourſe to the ſuccours of philoſophy; others have applied themſelves to the ſtudy of morality: but among Chriſtians, the moſt approved method has been to eſpouſe this or that ſyſtem of divinity. But, alas! how improper and unſucceſsful any, or all of theſe methods have been to heal our diviſions; to bring us back into the way of truth, which can be but

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one; and to unite mankind in judgment and in heart and affection, is too too evident from the many unhappy and yet ſtill prevailing diviſions and diſtractions, not only of the world in general, but even of chriſtendom in particular, to need any other demonſtration!

This being evidently the caſe, the reader may be inclined to aſk, Whence come all theſe evils? How comes it that men eſpouſe and maintain ſuch confuſed, ſuch unintelligible and inconſiſtent notions and opinions? How comes it that inſtead of keeping to the truth, which is clear and uniform, and always conſiſtent with itſelf, we are thus bewildered in ignorance and error? How comes it that philoſophy and morality, and even religion itſelf, are become ſo weak, confuſed and obſcure; that they are neither able to influence and govern our lives and actions, nor to illuminate and unite our hearts and affections?

Theſe, I readily grant, are very proper and material queſtions; and ſuch as deſerve all poſſible regard and conſideration. And therefore, in order to give ſuch clear and ſatisfactory anſwers to them, as they deſerve, I conceive it neceſſary to premiſe, by way

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of introduction, ſome general but ſhort remarks, upon the four moſt material points, that can poſſibly come within the compaſs of human knowledge, namely, reaſon, philoſophy, morality and religion.

It would be an endleſs, as well as an uſeleſs labour, to canvaſs all the writings and opinions of ancient and modern authors on thoſe heads: I ſhall therefore take a ſhorter way; I ſhall apply myſelf to a more infallible guide. Inſtead of running out into the ſpacious fields of learning and philoſophy, I ſhall keep cloſe to the common road of ſenſe and experience; inſtead of being biaſſed one way or other by the uncertain and contradictory deciſions of moraliſts and divines, I ſhall appeal to the hearts and conſciences of men, and to the plain and expreſs words of ſcripture, for the truth of what I have to ſay.

1. Every man is, and cannot but be conſcious to himſelf, that there is ſomething in him which perceives, thinks, reflects and actuates his whole body.

2. Whatever it be that is endued with thoſe various and admirable powers and faculties, it muſt be diſtinct from that we call the immortal ſoul, neither can it be that

breath

breath of life which GOD breathed into *Adam*, Gen. ii. 7. and to which he died immediately upon his tranſgreſſion: and therefore it muſt be that power which ſprung up in outward nature, immediately upon our firſt parents eating of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and is by us called the power of reaſoning.

3. Seeing the rational mind is endued with perception and reflection; and ſeeing the whole body is ſenſible throughout, and perception and reflection always and immediately accompanies and follows ſenſation; it evidently follows, that this power influences the ſoul, and penetrates and pervades the whole body.

4. There are commonly reckoned five ſenſes, namely, ſeeing, hearing, taſting, ſmelling and feeling; and nothing of all this viſible and material world can make any impreſſion, or produce any real ſenſation or perception in the rational mind, but in and through ſome one or other of them.

5. Whence all our real and true knowledge of the things of this viſible and material world, muſt be conveyed to the rational mind by the means and intervention of the ſaid ſenſes.

6. So

6. So that the extent and certainty of all our knowledge of the things of this visible and material world, must be measured by the number and accuracy of our said sensations and perceptions.

7. We find moreover, that the rational mind is endued with a power or faculty of retaining the impressions, images or ideas, of all such things as at any time are fairly presented to, and act upon the outward senses.

8. We find likewise, that the rational mind is endued with a power of variously considering, comparing, compounding, dividing, reflecting upon, and making deductions from such images and ideas.

9. This is what we call ideal knowledge; the variety, extent and certainty whereof, is measured by the variety of our sensations and perceptions; by the number of ideas that we retain; by the conformity which they hold with the things that they represent; and by the accuracy that we observe with regard to all their various and different relations.

10. Whence it is evident, that we can have no true idea of any thing, but what we first perceived by some one or other of the

ſenſes. True it is, we may either by analogy, compoſition, or diviſion, frame to ourſelves ideas of ſuch things as we never perceived by any of our ſenſes; but then they are only true, in ſo far as the things which we perceived at ſome other time, and whoſe ideas we make uſe of, bear an analogy or reſemblance to that which we would form an idea of; and as we are dextrous and happy in making a right compoſition and diviſion of ſuch known ideas. All which renders this ſort of knowledge extremely precarious and uncertain, and therefore ſcarce worthy of that name.

11. Hence it appears, that there is no ſuch thing as innate ideas: for things muſt firſt ſtrike and affect the ſenſes, before they can reach the reaſoning power that acts upon the ſoul, and they muſt raiſe and excite perception therein, before they can imprint their images or ideas upon it.

12. Both our real and ideal knowledge, acquired by the reaſoning power, grows up and improves, as we increaſe in years and experience. So that the more ſenſations and perceptions we have been accuſtomed to, and the more images and ideas we treaſure up and retain, and the more dextrous

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and ſkilful we grow in making reflections, and drawing inferences from them, the more rational, the more learned, and the wiſer we are eſteemed to be.

13. Upon the whole, it appears, that the power of reaſoning influences the ſoul and pervades the whole human frame, capable of being moved and affected by outward objects; and endued with a power or faculty of retaining their impreſſions, images or ideas; and of making reflections upon, and drawing inferences and concluſions from them, *&c.*

14. So that if we conſider, that we derive all our knowledge originally from ſenſe, and that we improve therein by uſe and experience, it appears, that this power of reaſoning is peculiarly ſuited and adapted to this viſible and material world. The things of this world are the proper objects thereof; and in the knowledge of them it ought (and would, had not the original order of nature been perverted, as we ſhall ſee hereafter) to acquieſce and reſt ſatisfied. For that which is the proper object of any thing, when it is enjoyed, it muſt ſatisfy and content the thing that coveted it and deſired it.

15. This ſeems to be the true nature of the

the rational, outward, or (in ſcripture language) natural man; as appears in young perſons, and in ſuch people as make it their buſineſs to follow and indulge their natural ſenſes and appetites. All ſuch ſenſations, perceptions, ideas, deſires and gratifications, as ſuch, are made, perceived, retained, purſued and enjoyed, without any regard to good or evil, to right or wrong, otherwiſe than as they affect and are agreeable or diſagreeable to the rational or reaſoning power.

16. And he that deſires, purſues and enjoys ſuch things; that is, he that makes the pleaſures and enjoyments of ſenſe, the object and the end of all his deſires and purſuits, may be ſaid to follow the law, propenſion (or inſtinct) of mere nature in its fallen ſtate.

17. That faculty of the rational mind which judges, conſiders, compares, compounds, divides, and makes inferences and deductions from ſuch ſenſations, perceptions, and ideas, as above mentioned; and in conſequence whereof, and as they appear agreeable or diſagreeable to the ſoul itſelf, the will is ſolicited and determined to love or hate, to aſſent or diſſent, to ſeek or fly from any object, or any ſort of real or ideal knowledge,

ledge, is what we may properly call natural reaſon.

18. All ſuch ſenſations, perceptions and ideas therefore, as aforeſaid, are the proper and immediate objects of natural reaſon: and the things themſelves which raiſe and excite ſuch ſenſations and perceptions, and which imprint ſuch ideas upon the rational mind, are only in a more improper and remote ſenſe, the objects thereof.

19. And in this laſt ſenſe only, all natural learning and philoſophy, all arts and ſciences, in as much, and in ſo far as they treat of any thing that either has been or can be perceived by all or any of the ſenſes, or repreſented by ſenſible ideas, are the objects of natural reaſon: and in the former, all our real and ideal knowledge of the things of this world, as ſuch, are the proper and immediate objects thereof.

20. But if we enter farther into the receſſes of our own breaſts, and make a ſtrict enquiry there, we cannot but find ſomething independent of all corporeal objects and ideas whatſoever; ſomething that likes or diſlikes, that approves or condemns our management, with regard to the world and worldly things; ſomething that checks us

in our career, that ſours all our pleaſures, and tells us how vain, empty and tranſitory all our joy and ſatisfaction in them is: we may there perceive, that enjoy what we will outwardly, we are yet ever wanting, and never ſatisfied; we may there diſcover an inward ſpring, a ſecret principle of truth, a moſt central and diffuſive ſenſe, an infinite and unſatiable deſire of good.

21. This inward and active principle of truth, this central ſenſe and infinite deſire of good, is neither produced by, nor dependent upon, nor capable of being filled or ſatisfied with any corporeal object whatſoever. For whatever any thing can produce, it can alſo ſatisfy; but this, neither any thing material or ſenſible can fill or ſatisfy, as the univerſal experience of mankind evidently demonſtrates; therefore nothing of that nature can produce it; therefore it is wholly independent of matter, and of every material object whatſoever. Nay, even in ſpite of all that the moſt wicked and ſenſual men can do to the contrary, we find that it will always be uppermoſt; that it pricks and accuſes, and oppoſes and condemns their moſt pleaſing appetites and deſires. Honour, power, riches and pleaſures, *&c.* may for a

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time ſtifle and ſmother, but they can never totally quench, they can never fill nor ſatisfy the ſame. On the contrary, we have many noble and illuſtrious inſtances, where in poverty and contempt, and under the moſt grievous afflictions, the ſharpeſt pains, and the ſevereſt mortifications, it is eaſy, ſerene and triumphant.

22. This inward principle then, which is neither produced by, nor dependent upon, nor capable of being filled and ſatisfied with any corporeal object whatſoever; this power which preſides over, and which moderates and controls all the inclinations, deſires and purſuits of the rational mind, muſt be ſomething really different and diſtinct from the ſame. This is what, in common ſpeech, is called conſcience; in ſcripture phraſe, the ſpirit and the inward man; and by us, the ſupreme light or Spirit acting upon the ſoul.

23. The ſupreme light or Spirit is of a much nobler nature than the rational power: for like an abſolute and mighty monarch, it reigns and governs in ſome meaſure in the hearts of all men, from the greateſt prince to the meaneſt peaſant; and being attended to, it preſides over and controls all the actions and deſires of the rational

mind; no created power can influence, bias or determine the ſame. And whereas we may obſerve, that the deſires, views, purſuits and opinions of the rational mind vary an infinite number of ways, according to the different conſtitutions and temperaments of bodies, and according to the ſeveral degrees and meaſures of knowledge and experience of particular perſons; we find here, on the contrary, that in all ages, nations and perſons, there is the ſame ſpring and principle of truth; the ſame indelible and infinite deſire of good; how much ſoever they may be miſtaken as to particulars, in taking that for true and good, which in reality is not ſo: ſo that all men in general love truth, and deſire good, as ſuch; and pretend to make the one the univerſal rule, and the other the ultimate end of all their actions.

24. This ſupreme Spirit, being endued with a moſt lively power of willing, deſiring, diſcerning and judging in the ſoul; nay, ſeeing we actually perceive, that the ſoul wills, deſires, diſcerns and judges; and that as an umpire, and even in contradiction to our natural appetites and deſires; and ſeeing a thing can neither will, deſire, diſcern nor judge of any thing but what it knows;

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nor know any thing, but what it firſt perceives; nor perceive any thing, but by ſome ſenſe or other; it evidently follows, that the ſoul muſt be endued with ſenſe or ſenſes.

25. The objects that upon firſt view preſent themſelves to the ſenſes of the ſoul from the light or ſupreme Spirit, are truth, juſtice, righteouſneſs, goodneſs, *&c.* We very ſenſibly feel and perceive the impreſſions that ſuch objects make upon the ſoul; but they are of ſuch a ſpiritual and extenſive nature, and the notions that we have of them, ſo far tranſcend thoſe that we draw from material objects, that we neither know how to expreſs them in words, nor to repreſent them, as they are in themſelves, by any ſenſible ideas; they are not, they cannot be raiſed and excited in us by any corporeal operation or impreſſion whatſoever: on the contrary, they are incomparably more quick, lively and powerful than any corporeal ſenſation: otherwiſe, how ſhould it come about that many men not only deny themſelves the pleaſures of ſenſe, but even chooſe to endure the moſt exquiſite torments, rather than act contrary to thoſe inward impreſſions made upon their minds? The objects then of the ſoul acted upon by the ſupreme Spirit,

are in their own nature powerful, ſpiritual and infinite.

26. As in the viſible and material world, the ſenſes, the deſires, the objects, and the medium, are all exactly proportioned one to another, and finite: ſo in the ſoul, ſeeing it is endued with an infinite capacity and power of deſire; and ſeeing the objects themſelves are in their own nature infinite; it follows, that the ſenſes of the ſoul muſt be capable of infinite perception, and the medium in and through which it perceives, muſt be proportioned both to the ſenſes and to the objects; that is, it muſt be ſomething really and totally different and diſtinct from matter; it muſt be ſomething that is infinite.

27. Seeing whatever is infinite muſt center in GOD, who is the one only infinite and eternal author and fountain of all that is infinite, that is, of all his own infinite attributes, perfections and emanations; it follows, that GOD is the object of the ſoul through the light or ſupreme Spirit, by which he diſcovers himſelf to it, in thoſe glorious and eſſential rays of his own divinity; in thoſe his ſeveral infinite and eternal attributes, (perfections and emanations)

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of juſtice, righteouſneſs, goodneſs and truth, *&c.*

28. This infinite capacity of perception; this infinite power of willing; this infinite deſire of good, can never be filled nor ſatisfied, nor happy in any thing, but in an adequate, that is, in an infinite object, which is GOD.

29. GOD therefore, is the only true, proper, and adequate object of the ſoul when influenced by the light or ſupreme Spirit; without him it can never be filled, nor ſatisfied, nor happy; in enjoying him it poſſeſſes all things; in enjoying him it is, it cannot but be infinitely, eternally, and completely happy.

30. GOD then acting in and upon the ſoul of man, and diſcovering himſelf therein, in his own eternal and eſſential attributes of juſtice, righteouſneſs, goodneſs, and truth, is, *That life which is the light of men*; *that light which ſhineth in darkneſs* (the dark and immenſe fund of deſire) *and the darkneſs comprehendeth it not*; *that true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world*, John i. 4, 5, 9.

31. Theſe bright and glorious beams and emanations of the divinity, darted into, and penetrating and irradiating the dark and

immenſe fund of the ſoul is that eternal and eſſential light; that everlaſting and unalterable law, written and engraven upon the hearts of all men; this, I ſay, is that light; this is that law, *whereby the Gentiles, which have not the* (written or revealed) *law, do by nature the things contained in the law: theſe having not the* (written or revealed) *law, are a law unto themſelves, which ſhew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conſcience alſo bearing witneſs, and their thoughts* (the very firſt impreſſions or ſuggeſtions which naturally ariſe and flow from ſuch a divine irradiation as aforeſaid, on the one part, and the ſuggeſtions and inclinations of the animal, natural or rational mind on the other) *the mean while accuſing or elſe excuſing one another*, Rom. ii. 14, 15. This is that ſure and certain guide, that upright and infallible judge; that ſacred and unerring oracle of truth; in a word, this is GOD's immediate vicegerent, which reigns and preſides in, and over the ſons of men, and in and through which he declares and manifeſts his will and pleaſure to them; ſee *Prov.* iv. 23. chap. xx. 27. and xxiii. 6.

32. This doctrine of the real diſtinction between the rational power and the ſupreme

light

light or Spirit acting upon the ſoul, is not only deducible from what, upon a ſtrict and impartial examination, we feel and perceive within ourſelves; but is perhaps as ancient as moſt in Theology; whether Gentile, Jewiſh or Chriſtian. I ſhall content myſelf in this place with the authority of St *Paul*, which to all Chriſtians, I hope, will be ſufficient; who in expreſs words mentions this diſtinction, 1 *Theſs.* v. 23. *And I pray God, your whole ſpirit, and ſoul and body, be preſerved blameleſs unto the coming of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt.* And again, 1 *Cor.* ii. 14, 15. *But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God;—but the ſpiritual* (or inward, *Rom.* vii. 22.) *man judgeth all things, yet he himſelf is judged of no man.* The ſame is alſo evident from *Heb.* iv. 12. *For the word of God is quick and powerful, and ſharper than any two-edged ſword, piercing even to the dividing aſunder of ſoul and ſpirit*, &c. And that this Spirit, acting upon the ſoul is alſo the ſame with the conſcience, is evident from *Rom.* viii. 16. compared with chap. ix. 1. In the firſt place the apoſtle declares, that *the Spirit itſelf beareth witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God:* and in the other he

explains it thus; *I ſay the truth in Chriſt, I lie not; my conſcience alſo bearing me witneſs in the holy Ghoſt.* And indeed, the whole tenor of the New Teſtament, and eſpecially of St *Paul*'s epiſtles, either ſuppoſe, or expreſsly mention this diſtinction between the rational power and the ſupreme light or ſpirit acting upon the ſoul of man. So that upon a careful and impartial peruſal of the ſcriptures, it will appear abſolutely impoſſible to interpret and reconcile many paſſages relating to the ſpiritual life without it.

33. Having thus eſtabliſhed this real diſtinction between the rational power and ſupreme ſoul or ſpirit; it will enable us to add ſomething farther, and to give an eaſy and natural ſolution to that great queſtion and controverſy about innate ideas, which ſome have obſtinately maintained, and others as ſtiffly denied. For if by innate ideas, thoſe who maintain the affirmative, mean ideas previous to any ſenſation whatſoever; or, if thoſe who deny innate ideas, would have it, that all our knowledge and ideas whatſoever is derived from, and grounded upon outward and corporeal ſenſations, it is certain, that both opinions are equally falſe and erroneous. The truth of the matter

ter then is this; the reaſoning power being adapted to the material and viſible world, the mind can have no knowledge of any thing relating thereto, but what it derives ſome how or other, either mediately or immediately from the outward ſenſes; and the ſoul being the proper ſubject of all divine operations, can neither know nor act in any wiſe agreeable to the divine will, but as it is illuminated and enabled by the divine light ſo to do: as the outward man can have no true notion or idea of colours, but what it receives by the impreſſions made upon the eye, by the means of light; ſo neither can the ſoul of man form any notions of good, but by the help of the divine light or life that was inſpoken, in the ſeed of the ſerpent-bruiſer, *Gen.* iii. 15. alone acting in and upon the ſame. Thoſe then who maintain, that all our knowledge is derived from ſenſe, are ſo far in the right: but in limiting and reſtraining the ſame to the outward ſenſes only, in that they are miſtaken: and on the other ſide, thoſe who ſay, that ſome part of our knowledge is ſuch, as can in no wiſe be derived from any impreſſions made upon the outward ſenſes, are certainly ſo far in the right too:

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but to imagine, that we ſhould find ſuch knowledge implanted and ſpringing up in us without any previous ſenſations at all, is a great (though a much more harmleſs) miſtake on their part, ariſing from their ignorance of this, that there are inward as well as outward ſenſes.

34. As therefore the wiſe and learned men of the world, are very diligent and careful to make as many and as accurate obſervations as poſſibly they can, in order to build upon, and to extend and improve natural knowledge; ſo is it likewiſe the duty of every one that ſincerely deſires to be enlightened with the beams of divine truth, and to improve in ſpiritual knowledge and underſtanding, to liſten to, and to cheriſh thoſe inward and ſecret touches and ſolicitations, thoſe kind and gentle dictates and inſpirations, which more and more draw and incline us to think of, to conſider and to deſire things inward, divine and immortal; which ſolicit us to do things that are good, true and juſt; which ſometimes, when we do not think of it, and even againſt our wills, affect and imprint upon us a deep ſenſe of our own impotence, vanity and nothingneſs, and of the obligations that we lie under to

depreſs

depreſs and humble ourſelves; which invite us to acknowledge, love, worſhip and praiſe the powerful, good, wiſe and juſt Author of our being, and of all other things; to ſupplicate his help; to follow and pleaſe him; and finally to do what in us lies to perſuade others to do the like, *&c.* Every one, I ſay, that ſincerely deſires to have his mind irradiated with true light, and to improve in ſpiritual knowledge, muſt before all things, before and without all ratiocination and artificial ideas, receive and cheriſh thoſe inward motions, ſenſations and ſuggeſtions; it is abſolutely neceſſary, that he cultivate and follow them with all poſſible veneration and obſervance. For, they are the true characters and the lively prints of the finger of GOD; they are ſo many real ſparks of divine light; they are the dawnings of faith and divine knowledge, from which reaſon itſelf ought to take its notions, judgments and ratiocinations; they are the true τὸ γνωστὸν τοῦ Θεοῦ, which is manifeſt in all men, φανερόν ἐστιν ἐν αὐτοῖς; they are, what we may be allowed to call, the true innate principles manifeſted by GOD himſelf in all men, ὁ γὰρ Θεὸς αὐτοῖς ἐφανέρωσε, *Rom.* i. 19.

33. It

35. It being evident then, that there is in man two real and diſtinct powers or principles that act upon the ſoul, namely, one ſuited and adapted to the viſible and material world, and the other proper and peculiar to GOD alone; and that this laſt, from its excellency, muſt have been ſuperior to, and appointed to preſide and rule over the former; and it being yet farther evident, that at preſent the generality, or rather that all men, notwithſtanding this ſuperiority and pre-eminence, inſtead of obeying the dictates and commands of this their lawful lord and governor, rebel againſt the ſame, and follow and purſue the bent of their own inferior appetites and deſires, and thereby run into all ſorts of irregularities and confuſions; it undeniably follows, that man is at preſent corrupted and degenerated; and that the rights of ſovereignty, and the duties of ſubjection between thoſe two powers are miſerably perverted, confounded and enervated.

36. GOD being infinitely perfect, is the only eternal and ſovereign Being (otherwiſe he could not be infinitely perfect) from whom all creatures and all beings whatſoever, de-

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rive their exiſtence. He is therefore the Author and the Creator of man.

37. And ſeeing nothing imperfect, diſordered or confuſed, can poſſibly proceed from GOD, who is infinite perfection itſelf: it follows, that he made man perfect and upright.

38. Seeing then, that GOD is the Creator of man, and that he made him perfect and upright; ſeeing GOD cannot be the author of any imperfection, diſorder or confuſion; and ſeeing man is at preſent liable to, and guilty of many corruptions and diſorders: it evidently follows, that GOD neither is nor can be the author or contriver of this our preſent ſtate; it is manifeſt, that we are all fallen and degenerated from that perfect and upright ſtate, wherein we were at firſt created.

39. The Gentile world, ſuch of them, I mean, as reſigned themſelves moſt to the guidance of that eternal and eſſential light; and to the dictates of that everlaſting and unalterable law, which they found written and engraven in their hearts, perceiving the great and univerſal degeneracy and confuſion, and the irregular and contradictory purſuits, views and inclinations of men; but

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being withal either wholly ignorant, or at leaſt not ſufficiently adverting to the real and eſſential diſtinction between the operations of the ſupreme Spirit and the rational power upon the ſoul; they mingled and confounded the faculties and the objects of both together; they limited and joined univerſal, eternal and naked truths (ſuch as juſtice, righteouſneſs, goodneſs, *&c.*) to finite, tranſitory and ſenſible ideas; they turned from the divine irradiations of GOD in and upon the ſoul by the ſupreme Spirit, almoſt wholly towards the creatures; they mingled and confounded them with the inferior light of natural reaſon; they ſcarcely conſidered them in any other view, but as they ſerved to moderate the paſſions, and to promote and ſecure the temporal happineſs of the natural man.

40. Upon theſe complex and confuſed principles and ideas, the Gentile moraliſts framed all their ſchemes of morality: upon them they built all their political inſtitutions; all their oeconomical doctrines; all their other rules and precepts relating to the better government of mankind. From the mixture, I ſay, of the two above mentioned principles, ariſes all the Gentile morality:

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and according to the predominancy of one or other of them, the ſchemes which they framed, and the precepts which they delivered, were more confuſed and more clouded with error, or more diſtinct and more nearly allied to truth.

41. The application of thoſe univerſal, eternal and naked truths, to finite, corporeal and ſenſible objects and ideas; or, in other words, natural reaſon, irradiated, enlightened and determined by thoſe bright, powerful and glorious beams of divine light, is what may properly be called moral reaſon.

42. And the ſeveral particular rules and laws, which ariſe and flow from ſuch an irradiation and compoſition, as they regard and terminate in the preſervation and happineſs of the rational or natural man, is what may properly be called the laws of nature.

43. So that the laws of nature, are either purely natural, and ſuch as do not oblige a man always to act up to them; or they are moral, and ſuch as lay an eternal and indiſpenſable obligation upon all men, always and upon all occaſions, to live up to them: thus ſelf-preſervation againſt all the reſt of the world beſides, and the natural inclinations that all men have to gratify their ſeveral

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ſenſual appetites and deſires, flow from the law or inſtinct of mere nature; but to ſuffer patiently and willingly for the good of the ſociety whereof we are members; to do to others as we would be done by: and conſequently, to do all the good that we can to others, and to moderate or deny our own natural inclinations and purſuits, in ſo far as they may tend to the prejudice of our neighbour, are moral duties flowing from that irradiation and compoſition laſt mentioned: the firſt ſort may, and ought to be upon many occaſions either moderated and reſtrained, or wholly denied and ſuperſeded; the other lays an eternal, univerſal and indiſpenſable obligation upon all men; it is that which truly and properly deſerves the name of the *Law of Nature*. But though there be ſuch a wide and mighty difference as to the obligation of thoſe ſeveral laws, yet it is obſervable, that SELF, and the preſervation and happineſs thereof, is the ſole object and end of both.

44. But as the moraliſts of the world always grounded their precepts and doctrines upon ſuch mixed, and conſequently erroneous principles; and as the end which they principally propoſed to themſelves, was only tempo-

temporal and ſenſible happineſs, which can never fill nor ſatisfy the infinite capacities and deſires of men; ſo we find, that all that they could ever ſay or write, has hitherto proved too precarious and inſufficient to produce any conſiderable reformation or amendment in the world: we find that they could never arrive at the truth itſelf; nor poſitively determine wherein the original and complete perfection and happineſs of man does conſiſt; nor clearly diſcover the true and only way that we muſt take, in order to recover them again.

45. Man then being ſunk into ſuch a miſerable and deplorable ſtate; man being notwithſtanding ſtill endued with an infinite and unſatiable deſire of good, that is, of perfection and happineſs; man being, as we have ſeen, utterly unable of himſelf to find out either wherein his true perfection and happineſs conſiſts, or how, or by what means to attain and recover them again: nothing leſs than the infinite goodneſs and mercy of GOD could grant new and extraordinary lights and aſſiſtances; nothing but ſuch new and extraordinary lights and revelations, ſuch divine and powerful aſſiſtances and effuſions of Spirit, could ever diſcover to him

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wherein his true perfection and happineſs does conſiſt, and how and by what means he may, and ought to endeavour to recover them again.

46. Theſe extraordinary revelations and diſcoveries, which teach us wherein our true perfection and happineſs does conſiſt, and how and by what means we may, and ought to endeavour to recover and enjoy them again, is, what we commonly call Religion.

47. The Chriſtian religion is taught and contained in the canon of the ſcripture; (but more particularly in that part of it called the New Teſtament;) ſo that if we impartially conſider what has been ſaid, and carefully examine thoſe ſacred books, it will evidently appear, that the ſum and ſubſtance of all true religion is this; that GOD created man, and all other things whatſoever, perfect and upright in their kind; that he endued man with an immortal ſoul to govern and preſide over the creatures of this viſible and material world; with a ſupreme Spirit or life, endued with ſenſes, powers and capacities ſuited and adapted to, and only capable of being filled and ſatisfied in and with GOD alone, and in his infinite attributes, emanations and perfections; that the ſoul

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was endued with perfect liberty, either of continuing by obedience in that life and ſpirit to which he was created, or of dying from it by turning to the knowledge of good and evil; that the ſupreme Spirit was originally appointed to preſide over, and to govern the ſoul, and all its powers and faculties, as being ſuperior thereto; that the ſoul was originally ſubject to, and only and immediately dependent upon GOD alone; that the perfection of man conſiſted in a perfect, complete, and moſt intimate union of the will of the ſoul with the will of GOD; and of the will of the rational power with that of the ſupreme Spirit; that the true, eſſential, and complete happineſs of the ſoul of man, conſiſts in the full and free enjoyment of GOD, who is the only proper and adequate object thereof; and who is alone able to fill and ſatisfy all its boundleſs and infinite capacities, powers, faculties and deſires; that man moſt baſely abuſed that moſt excellent and moſt divine gift of liberty, wherewith GOD endued him; that thereupon he withdrew his dependence, his heart and affections, and ſeparated and turned away his will and all the other powers and faculties of his ſoul from GOD, its only proper and

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adequate object; that upon this, the rational power rebelled againſt its lawful Lord and Governor, rejected and deſpiſed the dictates and commands thereof, and gave itſelf up almoſt entirely to the irregular and ſinful conduct of its own carnal affections and deſires; that from thenceforward the wills and other powers and faculties of the ſoul were mixed and blended together; ſin entered into the world; and nature itſelf fell into diſorder and confuſion: that no ſooner had man deſerted his GOD, turned his affections to the creatures, and plunged himſelf into ſuch an abyſs of miſery, but that the ſame moſt merciful, and infinitely good and wiſe GOD, in and by his beloved Son reimplanted in the ſoul, the ſeed of that light, life, or ſupreme Spirit it had loſt, that the ſoul by attending thereto, might be thereby delivered from that bondage and ſlavery into which it was fallen: that many meſſengers and prophets have been raiſed to communicate to the world ſuch revelations and diſcoveries, as GOD in his infinite wiſdom ſaw moſt proper and convenient; that he ſent JESUS CHRIST his only Son, and our moſt bleſſed Redeemer, to finiſh the great work of our redemption; and that he again authorized

thorized his apoſtles to teach and inſtruct us wherein our true perfection and happineſs does conſiſt, and to ſhew by their lives and doctrine, how and by what means we may be enabled to recover and enjoy them again.

48. This then is the end and deſign of all revelation and religion, even our perfection and happineſs: to this end CHRIST our Lord became our mediator and interceſſor with his Father; he undertook the redemption of loſt ſinners; he has procured new treaſures and ſupplies of grace and ſtrength for us: and if we will but open our hearts, and ſincerely co-operate therewith; if we will but take up our croſs, deny ourſelves and follow him; he has promiſed, and he cannot deceive us, that we ſhall be made perfect, even as our heavenly Father is perfect; and that we ſhall be made infinitely, eternally and completely happy.

49. Hence it is evident, that the primitive and original law of eternal nature eſtabliſhed by GOD, not only in the right of creation, redemption and preſervation, but even in regard alſo of our own complete perfection and happineſs, is, to love GOD; that is, to turn the deſire of the ſoul, and all its powers

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and faculties, to GOD, its only true and adequate object; to depend upon, to ſubmit, to reſign, and finally, to unite its own will to his will in all things. This love of GOD, which conſiſts in an abſolute reſignation and moſt intimate union of the will of the ſoul to, and with that of GOD, is the firſt and the laſt, the one only eſſential and everlaſting law of eternal nature. In purſuing and endeavouring to live up to this law, the ſoul by the light of the ſupreme Spirit finds the higheſt ſatisfaction and delight; in this conformity and union of wills, conſiſts its true perfection; and from perſeverance, and an inviolable obſervance thereof, will flow all its happineſs, throughout all the ages of eternity.

50. Hence alſo we may obſerve, that the law of temporal nature, with reſpect to its object and end, is twofold; that is, that it ought to be conſidered, either as it regards the rational or natural man in a degenerate ſtate; or, as it reſpects the ſoul purified by the ſupreme Spirit in the inward man, aſpiring after a ſtate of perfection and happineſs: in the firſt ſenſe, ſelf, or the natural man, is the only center and object of all our cares and concerns; and we conſider the ordinary

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irradiations of GOD in and upon the ſoul, ſcarce any otherwiſe, but as they are ſubſervient to the temporal happineſs and preſervation of the body: but in the other ſenſe, GOD himſelf is both the center and the object of the ſoul, whereupon out of his ſuperabundant grace and goodneſs, he enables it, by the ſupreme Spirit, to reduce the rational power in man to its original ſubjection and dependence, and to raiſe and advance the whole human nature to that perfection and happineſs from which it is fallen. In the firſt ſenſe, we move in excentric circles, whereof every one is a center to himſelf, and all the union and harmony that is between ſuch irregular orbs, is wholly derived from the common and ordinary influences of GOD ſcattered and diffuſed over the whole ſyſtem; but in the other, we endeavour to recover our primitive and moſt deſirable regularity; to drown and loſe our own little excentric orbs in the divine immenſity; and to reſign ourſelves wholly to be moved, acted and determined by the SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS himſelf, the eternal and ever-bleſſed center of all things.

51. But to be more particular: ſuch and ſo great is the degeneracy of mankind,

and ſo induſtrious have ſome been, not only to bring down the divine law to the ſame level with the moral; but even to confound this laſt, with that part which is purely natural; that in order to ſet this matter in the cleareſt light, we may now take the liberty to diſtinguiſh the law of nature, into natural, moral and divine. When we are ſolely governed by the firſt, we purſue all our natural inclinations and deſires, and do what in us lies to extinguiſh the divine light in our ſouls: by the ſecond, we yield ourſelves up to, and make uſe of the divine light, in order to moderate our natural paſſions and appetites, in ſo far as we think it will conduce to promote our own happineſs, and the tranquillity of the world; but by the laſt we totally conquer and ſubdue all our ſaid appetites and paſſions, and neither will nor deſire any thing of, or for ourſelves; but are wholly and abſolutely reſigned to be acted and guided by the will of GOD in all things. In living according to the laws of mere nature, we ſet ourſelves on a level with the beaſts; by obſerving the moral laws of nature, we perform the part of men, and of good citizens; and in reſigning ourſelves to be governed by the divine law of nature, we

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act like Chriſtians, and ſhall in the end be advanced to fellowſhip and ſociety with the bleſſed angels themſelves.

52. That new and extraordinary manifeſtation of GOD in the ſoul of every true and ſincere Chriſtian; that divine and eſſential communication of new light, life and love, darted into the ſoul by the ſupreme Spirit; that is, CHRIST himſelf, who is the life and the light of men; CHRIST living and dwelling in us; CHRIST in us the hope of glory; is the firſt principle, the worker and the finiſher of our ſalvation. JESUS CHRIST, I ſay, is that new and living principle, that powerful and all-ſufficient agent, who by a real but ineffable communication of his own divine and eſſential light, enables the ſoul to ſee its own preſent miſerable and wretched condition, and reſtores the whole man, ſpirit, ſoul and body, to their original and primitive ſtate of perfection and happineſs; and that light is what, in one ſenſe, and as it is the gift of GOD, is called divine faith.

53. As that faculty therefore of the ſoul, or that light whereby we perceive and judge, *&c.* of corporeal objects and their ideas, is called natural reaſon; whereby man, by

means of the real perceptions and images of things imprinted in the mind, is enabled to form various ideas of objects, and to compare them one with another; to compound, divide, and conſider them ſundry ways; and by variouſly conſidering them, to advance new notions, form arguments, and draw concluſions from them: and as natural reaſon, influenced and determined by the ordinary irradiations of divine light, with regard to the better conduct of the natural man, is what we call human or moral reaſon, and is in ſome meaſure communicated to all men: every man that cometh into the world is enlightned by it; it ſhineth in the darkneſs, *John* i. 5. So that faculty or power of the ſupreme Spirit, or rather that new and extraordinary communication of divine light, whereby the ſoul is enabled to ſee and perceive divine truths as they are in themſelves, abſtracted from all ſenſible and material objects and ideas whatſoever, and to recover its own original righteouſneſs and happineſs, in the confident expectation of things hoped for, and the conviction of things which are not ſeen, *Heb.* xi. 1. is called divine faith.

54. Hence we plainly ſee the difference between philoſophy, morality and religion.

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In philoſophy, natural reaſon is our guide, and all material things, and ſenſible ideas, are the objects thereof: in morality, we conſider the ſupreme Spirit, and the rational power, acting upon the ſoul, as one and the ſame thing; we mix and confound the ordinary manifeſtations of GOD in the one, with the light of natural reaſon in the other; and our firſt and principal aim and deſign is to moderate the paſſions, and to conſult the temporal happineſs of the rational or natural man: but religion ſuperadds new lights and aſſiſtances; it diſtinguiſhes between the ſuperior and inferior powers, whereof we are compoſed; it teaches us wherein our true perfection and happineſs does conſiſt, and how, and by what means we may again become perfect and happy in ſpirit, ſoul and body, as GOD at firſt created us.

55. From theſe principles we may diſcover the difference between hiſtorical and divine faith, and between the moral certainty of the one, and the divine infallible evidence of the other. Hiſtorical faith is founded upon human reaſon, and conſequently is an act of the ſoul influenced and determined by the ordinary irradiations of divine truth, whereby it aſſents and believes, for inſtance,

that CHRIST lived in ſuch an age of the world; that he did ſuch miracles, and was the author of ſuch doctrines as are recorded of him; and the certainty and evidence of this ſort of faith, is moral only; that is, it depends ſolely upon the opinion that we have of the ſincerity, veracity, *&c.* of CHRIST himſelf, and of thoſe that were witneſſes, and that firſt received his doctrines from himſelf, and afterwards handed them down to us from age to age: but divine faith is that new and living principle, that divine and eſſential light communicated to, and implanted in the ſoul of a Chriſtian, whereby it clearly and diſtinctly ſees and feels thoſe divine truths and doctrines, as they are in themſelves, and the natural congruity between them and its own faculties; and in conſequence whereof, it cannot but aſſent to and cheriſh them, and endeavour to live up to them, and hunger and thirſt more and more after them, as its natural food and nouriſhment, and as the only ſure and certain means of promoting its own perfection and happineſs. The one is in a manner wholly external; the other is altogether inward: the one repreſents the doctrines of CHRIST as hard and burdenſome, as foreign

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and oppoſite to fleſh and blood, or the natural man; the other repreſents them as pleaſant and eaſy, as natural and congenial to the inward man: the one is, as I may ſay, a dry, barren and ideal knowledge, and liable to many uncertainties, doubts and difficulties; the other imprints a living, clear and ſatisfactory conviction upon the ſoul, and is always accompanied with ſuch divine power and efficacy, as diſplays itſelf in the pureſt acts of love towards GOD, of charity towards all men, and in every good work: the one is like the relation of a traveller; the other is viſion and experience itſelf: the laſt ſo far tranſcends the former, that CHRIST himſelf, inſtead of appealing to moral evidence, expreſsly tells us, *If any man will do the will of him that ſent him, he ſhall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether he ſpake of himſelf*, John vii. 17.

56. But though divine faith be infinitely preferable to hiſtorical; yet I would not be underſtood as if I undervalued the latter; or meanly eſteemed the moral certainty and evidence that we have for the ſame; by no means. Hiſtorical faith, and the moral evidence that it is grounded upon, is that whereby we have the external word handed

down to us; it very juſtly challenges our moſt ſerious regard and conſideration; and he that allows it its due weight and authority, makes a fair ſtep towards being a Chriſtian: but it is only divine faith that opens and illuminates the heart and the mind, and that carries infallible and irreſiſtable evidence and conviction with it. All therefore that I aim at, is only to ſhew, how groſsly they are miſtaken who think, that a Chriſtian has nothing but moral certainty and evidence, whereupon to ground his belief.

57. From what has been ſaid, we may likewiſe diſcover the true ſprings of all the difficulties and diſputes about grace, which have ſo long and ſo much divided and diſtracted the chriſtian world, namely; 1. Becauſe divines, inſtead of diſtinguiſhing rightly between thoſe two powers or principles whereof we are compoſed, as they ought to have done, have mixed and confounded them one with another. 2. Becauſe that in all their enquiries about grace, they have conſidered man in a ſtate independent (as I may ſay) of his Creator; that is, they have rejected the true notion of an immediate concurrence, and of a real and continual influx of divine light and power in and upon

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the ſoul or ſpirit of man; and inſtead thereof have ſuppoſed, that GOD, at the creation, endued him not only with powers and faculties, but alſo with all other requiſites, whereby to govern himſelf and all his actions to their proper ends, by their own natural power and ſtrength. 3. Becauſe they have ſuppoſed, that man by his own natural ſtrength can perform actions morally good. 4. Becauſe they have conſidered moral goodneſs, or that power whereby we are enabled to perform actions morally good, and divine grace, not as degrees of the ſame light, but as two different and diſtinct lights. 5. Becauſe they have looked upon grace, even in the ſtricteſt and moſt divine ſenſe of the word, not as ſomething truly divine, and yet eſſentially required in order to make men happy (as light truly flows from the ſun, and yet is indiſpenſibly required by the eye in order to ſight) but only as a new mode, quality, habit or light, (ſuch as is that which ariſes from any particular branch of acquired natural knowledge with regard to the rational power;) ſuperadded to what we had before, and therefore conferred only upon particular perſons, at certain times and ſeaſons: or

more plainly, they have looked upon grace, not as ſomething eſſentially required in order to make a man happy in all ſtates whatſoever; but rather as ſomething without which man in a ſtate of innocence might have been completely happy, and may be ſo ſtill in ſome meaſure, even in this life. 6. Becauſe that upon theſe, and ſuch like principles and notions, they have found it extremely difficult, if not utterly impoſſible, to reconcile the origin and operations of divine grace, with the liberty and independency of man's will.

58. On the other hand; if we duly conſider what has been already ſaid, we may eaſily ſet the whole matter in a very clear and ſatisfactory light: for if we conſider the matter aright and without prejudice, it evidently appears, 1. That the ſoul has an indelible and infinite deſire of good. 2. That as in the natural man, ſo in the operations upon the ſoul, perception and volition are two different and diſtinct powers; and that the former, as ſuch, does not in any wiſe neceſſarily determine the latter. 3. That GOD, and his divine light, is the only proper and adequate object of the ſoul. 4. That the juſt and

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natural conſequence of man's ſin and rebellion againſt GOD, was, that his ſins ſeparated and became as a thick cloud between him and his GOD; whereupon could not but enſue in the ſoul an eclipſe of all manner of divine light. 5. That no ſooner had man plunged himſelf into this abyſs of darkneſs and miſery, but that JESUS CHRIST, the eternal Word, became our mediator and interceſſor with his Father; who thereupon, and in and through the merits and mediation of his only beloved Son, was pleaſed to allow unto all men, notwithſtanding what had happened, grace and time to repent and turn unto him again; that is to ſay, GOD, in and through the merits and mediation of JESUS CHRIST, does yet, notwithſtanding of man's ſin and rebellion, pour into the ſouls of all men the influences of divine light; like the riſing ſun in a dark and gloomy morning, he breaks through the thickeſt clouds of ignorance and error, and darts many bright and glorious beams of divine light into the ſoul of every creature; *He maketh his ſun to riſe on the evil and on the good*; and this is what is called preventing grace. 6. That man is at preſent placed in a middle or probationary ſtate, he has life

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and death ſet before him; he is ſolicited on one ſide by his carnal appetites and deſires, and on the other by the pure and divine influences of GOD in the ſoul: by thoſe he is tempted to ſtoop to ſenſual and tranſitory pleaſures; by theſe he is animated and inſpired with noble and generous deſires after ſpiritual and eternal joys: the firſt inclines him to ſit down contented in the enjoyment of the creature; the other aſſures him, that there is no true happineſs nor ſatisfaction, but only in the Creator. 7. That it is in our own power, which of thoſe two principles we will ſuffer ourſelves to be governed by. 8. That in order to determine which to embrace, or which to ſuffer ourſelves to be governed by, we ought diligently to reflect upon, and to compare the objects offered to the ſoul by the ſupreme Spirit, and thoſe offered by the rational power or aſtral ſpirit, one with another; we ought impartially to conſider and to enquire into the nature of ſuch different and contrary perceptions, and to approve and cheriſh ſuch only as we find moſt agreeable, permanent and ſatisfactory. 9. That for want of ſuch a ſtrict and impartial enquiry, the generality of men, ſince the fall of *Adam*, have given themſelves up

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almoſt wholly to the conduct and government of the natural man, to fulfil the luſts and deſires thereof. 10. That ſeeing every man has an infinite and innate deſire of good; that nothing but an infinite good can fully ſatisfy and content the ſame; that nothing can be infinitely good but GOD alone; and conſequently, that nothing but GOD alone can fully ſatisfy and content the infinite capacity and deſire of man; it is evident to a demonſtration, that man ought to make it the principal, the only buſineſs of his life, to ſtudy how and by what means, and to do what in him lies, to enjoy GOD. 11. That ſeeing there is no other way of coming to the enjoyment of GOD, but by becoming obedient either to the ſolicitations of ſenſe on one hand, or to the influences of divine light on the other: and ſeeing the former cannot, it evidently follows, that we ought to reſign ourſelves to the guidance and direction of the latter; that is, if we fairly conſider the ſolicitations of ſenſe on one ſide, and the divine influences of GOD on the other; and that the former, inſtead of forwarding, really hinders and obſtructs our union with GOD; it follows, that we ought, that we have the ſtrongeſt motives

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and obligations that can be, to perſuade us to reſolve and determine to ſubmit and reſign ourſelves to be guided and governed by the latter. 12. That grace, or the operation of divine light in and upon the ſoul, does not, properly ſpeaking, directly and immediately determine the will; nor yet does the will in any wiſe determine to embrace or will any thing that is good, before divine grace preſents itſelf, and operates in and upon the ſoul: it is that radical and infinite deſire of good, or, to ſpeak more properly, it is that innate and central tendency or power of the ſupreme Spirit, to turn the ſoul to its proper center and object, GOD the ſupreme good, which ſets all the powers of man at work; and it is an inward conſciouſneſs of the excellency of divine light and truth, and of the natural congruity and aptitude that they have to make us acceptable to, and to bring us to a cloſer union with GOD, without whom, we cannot but plainly perceive (if we do but a little conſider and reflect upon the nature of our own faculties) that we can never be truly happy, that determines the will to ſubmit and reſign itſelf to be governed and illuminated by the divine light: but of this a man could

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never be a judge, did not the divine light, or the grace of GOD, firſt preſent itſelf and operate in him. 13. That upon a man's willing, determining and reſolving in all ſincerity and humility, to reſign himſelf to be governed by the divine influences of GOD in and upon the ſoul; GOD, on the other ſide, out of his infinite love and goodneſs to mankind, and in and through the alone merits and continual interceſſion of JESUS CHRIST our bleſſed Lord and Redeemer, communicates new and extraordinary meaſures of divine light to ſuch a perſon; which is what inſpired writers, in a more particular and limited ſenſe, mean by the word grace. So that grace, in this ſenſe, and faith, as deſcribed above, are but two words ſignifying one and the ſame thing. 14. That this new and extraordinary communication of divine grace and faith, is ſo diffuſive and powerful, that it effectually enables the ſoul to mortify and ſubdue all the irregular inclinations and deſires of the natural man; it conſumes and annihilates every thing that croſſes, hinders, or in any wiſe oppoſes the divine operations in the ſpirit. 15. That as to the great work of ſalvation, the ſoul of man is, with regard to the ſupreme Spirit, in a man-

ner wholly paſſive; all that he can do with regard to that, is only upon ſuch an inward conſciouſneſs and reflection as I have juſt now mentioned, to ſubmit and reſign the ſoul to be irradiated, acted upon, and governed by the new and extraordinary influences of divine grace, *that God may work therein both to will and to do of his good pleaſure*; and all that man co-operates therewith, is only in and through the power and ſtrength thereof, to mortify and ſubdue the natural man with all its diſorderly luſts and affections, and by that means to do all that in him lies *to work out his own ſalvation.*

16. That whereſoever divine grace dwells and reigns, it always produces good works; ſuch as love, charity, meekneſs, humility, *&c.* So that inſtead of meriting grace and favour of GOD by our good works, it is evident that we cannot ſo much as do the leaſt good thing, no, nor think a good thought, but by the help and aſſiſtance of divine grace: the ſoul may be compared to a tree, whoſe center and root is fixed and planted in GOD; from him it derives and ſucks in all its ſap and nouriſhment, all the influences and irradiations of divine light; and according as it is ſurrounded and cramped with

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the love of this world, or warmed and cherished by the love of GOD, it comes to be overgrown and choked with the briars and thorns of ſin and wickedneſs; or, it grows up and thrives, and produces all the goodly fruits of love and charity, and every other good work.

59. Now from all that has been ſaid, we may diſcover the ſource and the ſpring of all the immorality, hereſy and infidelity; of all the errors, diviſions and diſtractions which ever have been, and ſtill are ſo plentifully and ſo ſucceſsfully broached and propagated in the world; namely, Becauſe we have forſaken GOD the Father of truth, *and the fountain of living waters, and hewn out to ourſelves broken ciſterns that can hold no water*; becauſe we have withdrawn our dependence, our wills, our hearts and affections from him who is the father of our ſpirits; and in whom we live, move and have our being: becauſe we have forſaken him who is the light, the life, the ſtrength, the way, the ultimate end, and the only eternal and moſt profound center of all things: becauſe we have ſacrificed whatever was his, in the right of creation, redemption and preſervation, to every ſtrange and ſenſeleſs idol,

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to every vain and periſhable pleaſure, to every wild and extravagant paſſion: becauſe we, poor weak creatures, have not only moſt preſumptuouſly rebelled againſt GOD, our natural, our rightful, our lawful ſovereign, and endeavoured to ſet ourſelves up as ſo many abſolute and independent beings; but have alſo moſt unworthily ſuffered corrupted reaſon to uſurp that throne, and to ſway that ſcepter, which none can fill, none can manage, but infinite Majeſty alone. In ſhort, the ſpring of all the above mentioned evils is this, that inſtead of turning and offering up our ſoul, with all its powers and faculties, wholly to GOD, to love, praiſe and worſhip him; to be filled with the pure and undefiled waters of his truth; and to be endued with light, grace and ſtrength, whereby to ſee the beauty and harmony of divine truths as they are in themſelves, and to recover its own original dominion and authority over the outward man; we give ourſelves up wholly to the conduct of the rational power acting upon the ſoul, and have no other regard to the pure and univerſal dictates and influences of divine light, but as they are limited, mixed with, and united to the narrow images and ideas of

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the natural man; which in this corrupted ſtate being infinitely various, muſt conſequently produce all that variety of notions and opinions, &c. which ever have, and ſtill do prevail among mankind.

60. Laſtly, From what has been ſaid, we may obſerve how ignorantly, how unjuſtly, how abſurdly men treat the objects of divine faith, when they would examine them before the inferior tribunal of corrupted reaſon. No man, ſurely, ever thought, that a blind man can diſcover the nature of colours; or that the deaf can have any notion of muſic; or that the eye can hear, or the ear ſee; or, that a finite capacity can comprehend infinity. And yet a man may as fairly maintain the affirmative of any of theſe propoſitions, as ſay, that the rational power can or ought directly and adequately to comprehend and underſtand the objects of divine faith.

Many of theſe things, I fear, will appear as paradoxes to ſome of the learned men of this age; that is, to ſuch as ſet up natural, or even moral or human reaſon as the only guide and ſtandard of their faith. But if they really wiſh well to religion, as I hope many of them do, I ſhall only deſire them

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ſeriouſly to conſider, that CHRIST, his croſs and his doctrine, were of old *to the Jews a ſtumbling-block, and unto the Greeks* (a people famous for their learning) *fooliſhneſs*, 1 Cor. i. 23. And the reaſon the apoſtle gives for it is, becauſe *the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are fooliſhneſs unto him: neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned. But he that is ſpiritual* (that is, the ſupreme Spirit or inward man) *judgeth* and diſcerneth *all things, yet he himſelf is judged of no man*, 1 Cor. ii. 14, 15.

And to ſay all in one word, reaſon is our active underſtanding, namely, that outward one adapted to this viſible world, and given us for the uſe of this mortal life.

Nor can it comprehend or have any relation to the inward underſtanding, which can only be referred to the inviſible world and the inward ſenſes. For reaſon is common to all men; who therefore have defined themſelves to be reaſonable animals. But ſcarce ſhall we find one among many millions, who in this life uſes his inward ſenſes; and the underſtanding correſponding to them.

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And in like manner it is evident, that neither does reaſon belong to the innermoſt underſtanding. For even here, there are but very few that ſufficiently advert to themſelves, and obſerve the influxes of divine light, ſo as from thence to take occaſion to form new ideas. But every one in ſome meaſure, and very often the moſt wicked, and ſuch as are wholly void of all ſpiritual knowledge, are the greateſt proficients in reaſon.

To conclude then: let me deſire and intreat all honeſt men, all affectionate lovers of truth, and all ſincere Chriſtians, into whoſe hands theſe papers ſhall come, diligently and impartially to ſearch the ſcriptures, and to examine their own hearts, and ſeriouſly to weigh and conſider both what they read in thoſe divine books, and what they obſerve within themſelves, and to compare all together; and if after all, they find any objections, difficulties or doubts ariſing within themſelves, let them earneſtly implore the divine goodneſs and mercy to remove and diſperſe the clouds of their ignorance; and let them attentively liſten to, and reflect upon the motions and dictates of their own hearts and conſciences, that is, of

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that ſpirit within themſelves, which, by GOD's aſſiſtance, judgeth and diſcerneth all things: let ſuch perſons, I ſay, ſincerely and faithfully follow theſe directions; and then they may be aſſured, that the GOD of truth, and the Father of mercies, will in his own due time, lead and bring them into all truth.

OF THE

TWO SPIRITS IN MAN,

EACH STRIVING FOR THE

GOVERNMENT OF THE SOUL.

That GOD only, by the inſpirations of his holy Spirit, is the guide and director of the ſouls that deſire to be obedient to his teaching; and that in all men there are two internal teachers, each of whom endeavour to guide and direct the ſoul.

HAVING treated of the two principles there is in man, and of the real and true difference there is between natural reaſon, moral reaſon, and faith; together with the neceſſary diſpoſitions of the ſoul for the diſtinguiſhment of each; the next thing that deſerves our conſideration, is the guide whoſe directions we may and ought to follow; for as truth and experience teaches, there are two internal teachers in every man, namely, 1. The ſpirit of corrupt nature. 2. The divine Spirit. Both which in all our deliberate actions do offer themſelves, and even ſtrive for maſtery, contending which of them,

with the excluſion of the other, ſhall lead us in the ways proper and pleaſing to each.

The ways, as alſo the ends to which they conduct, are directly contrary to one another; for the ſpirit of corrupt nature only teaches us ſuch things as are for the preſent pleaſing and ſuitable to our carnal deſires, or ſenſual and ſecular deſigns; but pernicious to the ſoul, or immortal ſpirit, by leading it into endleſs errors and labyrinths, that ſeparates it from GOD and true happineſs, and carries it to eternal miſery. On the other ſide, the Spirit of GOD diſcovers unto us, the folly and danger of following ſo blind and pernicious a guide as the ſpirit of nature is, and teaches us that our happineſs conſiſts in rejecting ſuch a wandering guide, and walking in paths quite contrary; in renouncing preſent ſenſual pleaſures and gratifications, ſo far as they are a hindrance to our knowing of GOD and ſpiritual things, the which only ſhould be the object of all our deſires and endeavours, as thereby only we can arrive to eternal happineſs and union with GOD.

Beſides theſe two ſpirits, man neither has nor can have any other teacher within him, and with both theſe every man is continually attended

attended. Whatſoever therefore is not the teaching of the divine Spirit, is the ſuggeſtion of the falſe and evil teacher, who is GOD's and our enemy: the which took poſſeſſion of the ſouls of men upon *Adam*'s tranſgreſſion, whoſe fault was the not attending to the teaching of GOD's holy Spirit, which then was the only internal teacher; but inſtead thereof hearkening to the flattering temptations of the woman, ſeduced by that wicked ſpirit the devil. And from *Adam* this corruption of our nature is communicated to all his poſterity, ſo as in that ſtate we have no other teacher. But the holy Spirit, the new heavenly teacher, is freely given us, by means of the Bruiſer of the ſerpent, it being the new divine principle implanted in us, to turn our ſouls to GOD, and is continually ſoliciting us to walk in his ways.

Our miſery is, that by our own actual mortal ſins, the divine light is, for the time, almoſt extinguiſhed, ſo as not to produce any conſiderable good effect upon the will: but it is not ſo on the other ſide, that by grace the falſe teacher is either totally expelled, or ſilenced; for it remains in the corrupt nature of even the moſt perfect man, and GOD knows even the beſt men are too much inclined often to hearken to

it. Thoſe that are leſs perfect, though in matters of neceſſary obligation they follow the conduct of the divine Spirit, yet in leſſer matters, to their thinking, they for the moſt part are moved with no other principle than that of corrupt nature, by which they incur defects, which though not mortal, do much obſcure the divine light, and weaken its efficacy. Yea, even in thoſe things wherein ſuch imperfect ſouls do, as to the ſubſtance, and eſſentialneſs of the action, follow the direction of GOD's Spirit, yet by mixing of ſenſual intereſts and ends, ſuggeſted by the falſe teacher, they diminiſh the value of them. And ſo ſubtil is that wicked ſpirit, that it often makes its falſe ſuggeſtions paſs for divine inſpirations, and ſeldom miſſes inſinuating his poiſon in ſome degree, either into the beginning, or in the performing of our beſt actions.

From theſe unqueſtionable grounds it follows, " that in all good actions, ariſing " from the internal teaching of the holy " Spirit, which conducts to meditation and " perfection, GOD alone is our maſter and " director; and creatures, when he is pleaſed " to uſe them, are only his inſtruments. So " that all other teachers whatſoever, whether the light of moral reaſon, or of external

" directors,

" directors, or rules preſcribed in books, " *&c.* are no further nor otherwiſe to be " followed or hearkened to, than as they " are ſubordinate and conformable to the " internal directions, and inſpirations of " GOD's holy Spirit; or as GOD invites, in- " ſtructs and moves us to have recourſe " unto them, by them to be informed in " his will, and by him to be enabled to " perform it. And if they be made uſe of " any other ways, they will certainly miſ- " lead us." So that in the ways of holineſs and virtue it is GOD only that internally teaches, both the teacher and diſciple, and his inſpirations are the only leſſon for both. All our ſpiritual light therefore is from divine illumination, and all our ſtrength, as to theſe things, is from the divine operation of the holy Ghoſt on our wills and affections.

Now, that this ſo important a truth may be more diſtinctly made known, and more firmly imprinted in the minds of all thoſe that deſire to be inſtructed by GOD, in the internal ways of his divine love; they are to take notice, that the inſpirations here acknowledged to be the only ſafe rule of all our actions, though of the ſame nature, yet do extend further, and to more and other

particular objects, than the divine light or grace, by which Chriſtians, ſo called, do live common lives in this world, yea than it does even in thoſe that ſeek perfection by the exerciſe of outward actions.

The light and virtue of common grace affords generally, to all that ſeriouſly endeavour to ſave their ſouls, ſuch internal illuminations and motions, as are ſufficient to direct them for the reſiſting of ſinful temptations, and the performance of neceſſary acts of virtue, in circumſtances wherein they are obliged to act, though this direction be often obeyed with many circumſtances of defect; the which notwithſtanding might be made inſtrumental to the advancing and perfecting of holineſs in their ſouls, if they made a due improvement thereof; but they have neither delight nor ſtrength, or but ſeldom, by reaſon they live diſtracted lives, in diſſipation and attachments to worldly things, and without that recollection that is neceſſary for the diſpoſing of ſouls to receive an extraordinary degree of light and grace.

But as for thoſe who are ſincerely diſpoſed to make a progreſs toward perfection, beſide the common grace, light, or inſpiration neceſſary for the due performance of eſſen-

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tial duties, they walk in a ſuperior light, and are guided by continual inſpirations, even in regard of their ordinary actions and occurrences, in all which they clearly ſee how they are to behave themſelves, ſo as to do the will of GOD, and to improve themſelves in the divine love. The which extraordinary light is communicated unto them only by virtue of their meditations, ardent prayers, and attention to the ſtill voice of GOD's Spirit, ſpeaking in the inmoſt ground of their hearts. In all which, well minded ſouls, by diſpoſing themſelves to reſignation, will not fail to have a ſupernatural light and impulſe communicated, to enable them to make choice of that which will moſt advance them in ſpirit, and is moſt agreeable to the will of GOD, if they correſpond thereto. Whereas without ſuch light, ſouls are generally directed by the obſcure light of moral reaſon, the impulſe of nature, and by carnal ends and intereſts, to their great diſtraction and diſſipation.

Of the moſt uſual manner that the divine inſpirations are communicated.

GENERALLY and ordinarily ſpeaking, when there is propoſed the doing, or

not doing, any external work, and that both of them are in themſelves lawful, the divine inſpiration in contemplative ſouls moves to the not doing, becauſe the abſtaining from much external working, and the increaſing inward meditation, is moſt ſuitable for a ſoul that has given itſelf up to GOD. Except when the work, and doing, is more beneficial to our neighbour, and a mortification to ſelf-love, and to the inordinate affections of corrupt nature.

The ſpecial points and matters of omiſſions, which, among others, are uſually the objects of ſuch divine calls and inſpirations, may be ſuch as theſe; namely, 1. To avoid unneceſſary, though allowed, converſation and correſpondence with others. 2. To be cautious and ſparing in the uſe of the tongue, and, as *David* prayed, *to ſet a watch before the mouth, and to keep the door of the lips.* 3. Not ſolicitouſly to avoid affairs, for the mortifications they may bring upon our carnal and corrupt nature. 4. To avoid the incumbering ourſelves with affairs not pertaining to us, and with which we have nothing to do. 5. To ſhun honours, offices, care over others, and the like. 6. Not earneſtly to deſire this or that unneceſſary thing

or accommodation, but to be content without them. 7. Not to queſtion, or expoſtulate, why ſuch a thing was ſaid or done, but to be patient. 8. Not to complain of, or accuſe any, unleſs juſtice demands it. 9. In caſes of ſupportable, and not miſchievous, oppreſſions, to abſtain from appeals to courts of law, and to ſuperiors. 10. To avoid the voluntary cauſing or procuring a change in our preſent condition, employment, place, *&c.* 11. To quiet and compoſe all manner of paſſions riſing in the heart, and all troubles in mind, and to preſerve the ſoul in peace, tranquillity, cheerfulneſs, and in obedience and reſignation to GOD. 12. To avoid ſuch things and doings as will diſtract our minds with diſſipation, and variety of repreſentations. 13. To forbear all particular partial friendſhips and compliances. 14. To preſerve convenient liberty of ſpirit, and abſtain from incumbering or inſnaring ourſelves by any voluntary aſſumed taſks, obligations, *&c.* though in matters in themſelves good, but which may, by becoming obligatory, prove hindrances to better things. In a word, the divine inſpirations here treated of, do ever tend to a ſimplicity and uprightneſs in

thoughts, words, and actions; and to all things that may advance the more perfect exerciſe of obedience, humility, reſignation, purity of prayer, purity of intention, and to fix the ſoul in the love of GOD, and of man; ſo that whatever is contrary to any of theſe, is to be rejected as a diabolical ſuggeſtion, and coming from the falſe teacher.

As for extraordinary ſupernatural inſpirations, illuminations, apparitions, voices, converſations with ſpirits, meſſages from heaven, and the like, a diſciple of the bleſſed JESUS is forbidden to pretend to, or ſo much as deſire them, yea rather to pray againſt them, leſt he ſhould abuſe them to vanity and pride.

The divine inſpirations, lights, impulſes, or calls here ſpoken of, are, 1. Either ſuch as are immediately communicated to the ſoul alone; or, 2. Mediately, with the concurrence of ſome inſtrument of GOD's directing; that is, by the means of external teachers, or by the uſe of reading, or hearing read, the ſcriptures, or other ſpiritual and pious books.

This is excellently and fully treated of by many ſpiritual writers, among whom there is one who ſays, that doctrine is attained by ſtudy, but wiſdom is had by the Spirit of

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the Lord, *Iſa.* xi. 2. therefore doctrine is not wiſdom. Judging pertains to him to whom the ſpirit of knowledge and the fear of the Lord is given, either by way of inclination, or by the habit of virtue; and *Ariſtotle*, in his tenth book of *Ethicks*, ſays, "A virtuous man is the meaſure and rule "of human actions." This pertains to wiſdom, which is the gift of the holy Ghoſt, and according to the apoſtle *Paul*, the ſpiritual man judgeth all things, 1 *Cor.* ii. 15.

Ariſtotle, though a heathen, could obſerve, "that to that good which is honeſt and vir-"tuous, there is firſt required a certain im-"pulſe, not to be accounted for by reaſon; "and thereby the mind is able to diſcern "and determine." And further he ſays, "that many are impelled to good and vir-"tuous things, and attain them without the "exerciſe of reaſon; which, ſays he, is to "be aſcribed to nature: for ſuch inclination "is naturally imprinted in our ſouls, by "which we are impelled to ſuch things, "as will render us happy without any "exerciſe of reaſon; inſomuch that if one "ſhould aſk ſome perſons ſo diſpoſed, "why does it pleaſe you to do ſo, they "would anſwer, I know not, but ſo it pleaſes "me

" me to do." Then he adds, " The like " happens to thoſe that are divinely inſpir- " ed, and moved: for ſuch are impelled to " the doing of thoſe things without the ex- " erciſe of reaſon," *Lib.* ii. *Magn. Moral.* cap. 7, 8. He likewiſe obſerves that ſometimes there are ſuddenly injected, certain good thoughts and deſires, from which many good actions do proceed and follow; and enquiring from what principle ſuch good thoughts may be judged to proceed, he reſolves, that the ſoul herſelf is not the cauſe of them, becauſe they prevent all exerciſe of reaſon; therefore the cauſe of them muſt be ſomewhat more excellent than the ſoul; and that is only GOD.

All theſe inſtructions and exhortations to attend unto, and depend on the divine inſpirations, would be in vain; yea all the promiſes of GOD that he will give his holy Spirit to thoſe that pray for it as they ought, would be as vain, if there were no means to be aſſured of ſuch inſpirations that they are from GOD: I mean the aſſurance of hope, for a certainty of faith, without extraordinary revelation, cannot be had of ſuch matters, which neceſſarily ſuppoſe the like aſſurance of being in a ſtate of grace. Hence

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it is we may discern and judge with security what is a divine inspiration, namely, when a soul given up to GOD proceeds with recollection, and resignation, in all doubtful matters of importance, it may, and ought to take that to be the divine will, to which she is interiorly moved; in, or after her recollection, when passions do not prevail, so as the matter is not otherwise, or contrary to obedience to the laws of GOD or man.

For it is certain, and faith obliges us to believe, that all the good actions we do, and all the good thoughts we entertain, is in virtue only of a precedent, and concomitant illumination of our understanding, and inclining of our will, immediately caused by GOD. And experience tells us, that when vain or sinful images, or inordinate passions possess the mind, GOD's illuminations of good are either unperceived, or neglected by us, and his motions at that time ineffectual. It is therefore when the soul is in a fit disposition to receive the blessed effects of GOD's holy Spirit, that he makes good his promises. When by a profound recollection, an humble soul withdraws all her affections from self, and all other creatures, and endeavours to expel the images of them;

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raiſing herſelf, according to her power, to the deſire of a ſtrict union with GOD, and to be informed of his will, only intending thereby his glory, and the increaſe of his divine love: then may the ſoul moſt ſecurely judge it to be by divine inſpiration, and motion, and not trouble herſelf in the exerciſe of the imagination, ſenſes or paſſions, and if ſhe will faithfully correſpond, GOD will be wanting to her in nothing.

DISCOURSES

On ſeveral SUBJECTS:

I. The difference between a PHILOSOPHER and a CHRISTIAN.

II. Of the Fall of *Adam*, and that JESUS CHRIST is the ſole teacher in the new man.

III. The difference between the life of NATURE and the life of GRACE.

IV. Of the miracles of the Old and New Teſtament, and how the will of GOD may be known.

V. Of the union of the church of JESUS CHRIST, and of the true religion.

DISCOURSE I.

The difference between a PHILOSOPHER and a CHRISTIAN.

What a Philoſopher is; they paſs for good Chriſtians; nevertheleſs it is the Spirit of CHRIST *alone that makes the Chriſtian.*

METhinks a Philoſopher is a man that examines every thing profoundly by the light of his moral reaſon; who will needs know the cauſe and the reaſon of every thing that is propoſed to him; whether it be juſt and reaſonable to act this way or that; who believes nothing but what he ſees, and that which is clearly demonſtrated to him. As it appears then to him a thing very plain, and which perfectly agrees with his moral reaſoning, that we muſt avoid and abſtain from vice, and on the contrary practiſe virtue, hate the one and love the other: if ſuch a Philoſopher is upright and ſincere,

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he will ſtudy by all means to practiſe what his moral reaſon is convinced of; he will not ſuffer his paſſions to bear ſway, but will bridle and keep them under by the ſtrength of his underſtanding and moral reaſoning, which perſuade him that it is a ſhame to follow one's paſſions, and ſuffer them to get the maſtery of him.

Here in a few words is the Philſopher. And how a rational and ſincere man governs himſelf in his conduct, and the more exact he is in following the light that ſhines in the darkneſs of human nature, and which produces his moral reaſon, the more regular and exact you ſhall find him in all his actions. This is what made ſo many heathen philoſophers, that have been held in admiration on account of their doctrine and conduct, practiſe virtue and combat vice, to far greater perfection than many others that call themſelves Chriſtians.

Among theſe laſt there are ſtill ſome perſons who endeavour, in the ſame manner that thoſe others have done, to live virtuouſly, and who by the conviction their moral reaſon affords them, ſtudy by all means to lead a wiſe and rational life; and as the chriſtian religion affords us a moſt complete

ſyſtem of morality, which the doctrine of our Lord JESUS CHRIST teaches us in the higheſt perfection, the moral reaſonings of wiſe men do agree exceeding well with this doctrine to a certain point; and ſo ſuch a wiſe man who applies himſelf, though faintly, to live a virtuous life, and does not follow the looſe unbridled conduct of libertines; ſuch a man, I ſay, paſſes immediately among us for a good Chriſtian. The more pains he beſtows, the more aſſiduous he is, and the more he ſtrives to follow the paths of virtue, ſtill the more he is looked upon as a good Chriſtian.

We know no Chriſtianity that engages us to a different conduct; it is excellent and approved by all, and paſſes for being the true chriſtian religion; and indeed this practice is rarely enough to be found among multitudes that confeſs what we call the chriſtian faith. There are very few that carry the practice of it ſo high. Such as do it, and employ all the ſtrength of their underſtanding to gain a rational conviction, that they ought to combat their vices and practice virtue, are greatly to be eſteemed.

Mean while, though in truth, the generality of Chriſtians know little other chriſtianity,

tianity, it is certain that ſuch wiſe and virtuous perſons are ſtill at a great diſtance from it; they ſtill want the knowledge of his power, whom they confeſs to be their Saviour; for I beſeech you tell me, is the bare hiſtorical knowledge of JESUS CHRIST, and of what we read that he hath externally done for us; the practice of a few outward ceremonies; all this, with a life that does not come near to that virtue which ſome heathens have practiſed with far greater perfection; will ever theſe things make a Chriſtian? Doubtleſs they will, you will ſay; what more would you have? Alas! it is moſt true that men in general are ſunk in ſuch a dreadful corruption, and ſuffer themſelves to be led by their corrupt paſſions, without ſhame, into all ſorts of vice, that it is not ſurprizing if that man is accounted a good Chriſtian, who applies himſelf, though faintly, to the practice of virtue: but where is the ſpirit of chriſtianity! in fine, what is that ſpirit? and how can it be proved that ſuch ſages have it not?

The apoſtle *Paul* (1 Cor. xiii.) ſpeaking of charity, makes a deſcription of all that one can do without it; of the gifts, graces, and virtues which one may poſſeſs, and of

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ſo extraordinary a liberality, that one would be apt to call it charity in a moſt eminent degree, ſince it goes ſo far as to give all ones goods to the poor; of a zeal for the confeſſion of ones belief, or ones faith, which riſes ſo high as *to give ones body to be burnt.* Who is it that puſhes his devotion and his zeal thus far? and yet the apoſtle ſays, that without charity "all is nothing. I am nothing:" what then is this charity, O holy apoſtle? He enumerates its effects very particularly; but what it is itſelf, the beloved diſciple *John* informs us, ſaying, *God is love*, 1 John iv. 8. it is GOD himſelf then that is charity, and we have not charity if we have not GOD in us. It is the *love of God*, his *Word*, his *Spirit*, all is one, for *if any man have not the Spirit of Chriſt, he is none of his*, Rom. viii. 9, 14. Here then is what makes a Chriſtian, namely, his Spirit; thoſe that are moved or *led by the Spirit of God, they are the children of God.* It is the Spirit in a perſon that makes him to be what he is. Here then is the diſtinguiſhing character of a chriſtian: he is one in whom the Spirit of GOD dwells, whom it moves, governs and leads, as the apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *if the Spirit of Chriſt dwell in you, &c.*

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This is that Spirit which muſt be the principle of life whence all our actions and operations flow, that they may be agreeable to GOD, and accepted by him; for it is in his well-beloved Son that he is well-pleaſed, (*Matt.* iii.) it is his Word, or Wiſdom; where it reigns and lives, there he takes delight. It is this kingdom which he teaches us to pray for, and which is within us; *thy kingdom come*, Matt. vi. 10. Luke xvii. 21. GOD loves nothing but that which is agreeable to his own eſſential perfection, and nothing is amiable but he, for nothing is good but he: *there is none good but one, that is God*, (Matt. xix. 17.) ſaid JESUS CHRIST; and if JESUS CHRIST declared it, and rebuked him that called him good maſter, according to his humanity, and will aſcribe this name to none but GOD alone, much leſs ought we to apply it to others. GOD alone then is good, and conſequently alone worthy to be loved. It is himſelf, his word in us, or charity, that is good and acceptable to GOD. It is this Spirit then that makes the Chriſtian, and renders all the actions and virtues of the man that is ruled and governed by it, chriſtian virtues and actions, becauſe they flow from a divine principle,

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from charity which reigns in the heart. It is for this that it is ſaid, *My ſon give me thy heart*, Prov. xxiii. it is the temple of GOD where he deſires to dwell, 1 *Cor.* vi. 19.

Let us not wonder then if ſo many perſons that reaſon well, and even try to put in practice what they know by the way of reaſoning, do nevertheleſs make ſuch ſmall progreſs in virtue, notwithſtanding all the trouble it coſt them. If they are ſincere, they will be obliged to own, that they have not ſo much as got the better of one ſingle vice or paſſion all their life long, with all their efforts; and if they fancy they have overcome them, that they are become great philoſophers, and have put all things under their feet; obſerve them narrowly, and you ſhall find that they are full of the love of themſelves, of a ſecret pride and elevation, and of ſelf-complacency, which is ſo much the more dangerous as it lies concealed under a fair outſide, adorned with apparent virtues. Theſe vices of the mind render us ſo much the more deſpicable in the ſight of GOD; for nothing is more contrary to him than ſelf-love and ſelf-complacency, theſe being the root of that corruption of original ſin that has infected us.

It is divine charity then, the love of GOD, and the love of our neighbour, or brethren, that makes us Chriſtians; it is it that gives us the chriſtian virtues, and is crowned with humility, which makes us contemptible in our own eyes, puts us in the place that belongs to us, and annihilates us as JESUS CHRIST annihilated himſelf: as on the contrary, knowledge puffeth up.

Experience ſhews, that perſons of great knowledge and learning are much more difficult to be converted than the ſimple. The apoſtle *Paul* needed that GOD ſhould employ a glorious light that might throw him to the ground, and ſtrike him blind, as to his outward ſight, in order to convert him; whereas ſinners and publicans went after JESUS at his ſingle word, *Follow me*: it worked ſuch a powerful effect in their hearts, that they immediately forſook all, their father, their bark, the buſineſs they were employed in, and followed him, without reflecting or reaſoning, or beſtowing a thought upon their temporal affairs.

To many this conduct of the holy apoſtles may ſeem extravagant, and contrary to every thing that reaſon, good ſenſe, morality, and the duty and obligations the natural love

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towards parents dictate to us, thus to follow a man that was paſſing by, unknown to them, and that had neither authority nor credit; at the bare word, I ſay, of a paſſenger, who only ſaid, *follow me*: O! how mean and deſpicable does this appear in the eyes of a philoſopher.

But you ſee here what the divine love was able to do, and actually does, when divine charity poſſeſſes itſelf of our hearts, and a bare word is uttered by the ſame Eternal Word, which is GOD himſelf. This Word penetrates ſo profoundly into our hearts, that it kindles in them inſtantly ſo great a flame, a love ſo pure and ſo ſingle, that they muſt yield, and follow him that calls them; and thereafter becomes the only object of their love, and makes them count all other things *as dung that they may win Chriſt*, who is that very Love: their conduct often goes beyond the limits which human reaſon preſcribes, and makes them be looked upon as mean and deſpicable in the eyes of the wiſe, that govern themſelves by their reaſon, knowing none other than rational motives. Therefore it was, our Lord ſaid, *I thank thee, O Father, that thou haſt hid theſe things from the wiſe and prudent, and haſt revealed*

them unto babes, Matt. xi. 25. to the ſimple ones, that know nothing but to love and obey, and ſubmit themſelves, like children; theſe have the diſpoſitions requiſite to receive the Spirit of grace into their hearts; and though they appear without ſpirit, and without conduct or wiſdom, in the eyes of the wiſe, who are full of themſelves, and their own ſufficiency, they do but wait a little while, and they will ſee that the love of GOD; which by its warmth quickens their hearts, regulates all their affections, enlightens the underſtanding, and with its divine light communicates to it the true knowledge and wiſdom that comes from above; will not ſuffer that ſoul to want either prudence or addreſs, for every thing which he deſigns it for; for the wiſe man ſays, that having aſked nothing of GOD but an humble, pliant and tractable heart, wiſdom was given him, and, ſays he, *all things were given me with it*, Wiſd. vii. 12. Thus it always happens to thoſe that follow the word of divine love, without reſtraint and without reflection: they leave all, they loſe all, and find all again in that Word, and without any law but that of love. He that deſires and aſpires after this divine love ſhall attain thereto, and find by experience, that

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it ſurpaſſes reaſon, ſets the man to rights, and baniſhes all that diſorder with which ſin has poiſoned him.

Why do we amuſe ourſelves in diſputing and reaſoning how this is done, deſiring to comprehend it by human reaſon? Why do we not rather make haſte eagerly to receive that bread that comes down from heaven to give life unto men, *John* vi. by believing, and opening the mouth of the ſoul with a ſincere deſire to be nouriſhed by it, and to receive without reaſoning this celeſtial food? How quickly ſhould we feel the admirable effects it produces? Do but open thy mouth and GOD will fill it, *Pſalm* lxxxi. 10. All that GOD expects from us is, that we open the mouth of our ſoul, and do not obſtinately keep it ſhut againſt him, and to the receiving thoſe infinite benefits which his bounty and love is continually offering to us. That we ceaſe to fill ourſelves with the huſks which the ſwine feed upon, that we may eat the heavenly bread and fleſh offered to us by JESUS CHRIST, yea, which is himſelf. I mean, that we ceaſe to fill our ſouls, our deſires, our affections, or to beſtow our love on the vain and tranſitory things of this world; things whereof GOD has given us the uſe, for the uſe and ſuſtenance of our

earthly fleſhly body, which is nouriſhed and maintained by them: but this is not what ought to be the nouriſhment of our ſouls, which are quite of another nature, and whereof the word of GOD ought to be the food.

In order then to be partakers of this ineſtimable grace, we need only open our mouths, that is, the deſire of our ſoul; and preſent ourſelves before him, that he himſelf may accompliſh and effect what he has promiſed us in his word, without troubling ourſelves about any thing elſe, but to believe that what he has promiſed he will infallibly accompliſh by his omnipotence, wiſdom and love. When one poſſeſſes a treaſure, he is much more contented than when he heard tell of it, and formed to himſelf an idea of it; this is fiction, the other reality. Let us go then to GOD by JESUS CHRIST; he is in us, in our heart; let us not ſeek him any where elſe; he reſides there; it is his empire; thither we muſt go in order to find him: and if you do not comprehend this ſecret, pray him to teach it you, he will do it; for he has ſaid, *I ſtand at the door*, (at what other door than the heart) *and knock; if any man will hear my voice, and open to me, I will come in to him, and ſup with him, and he with me*, Rev. iii. 20.

DISCOURSE II.

Of the fall of *Adam*, and that JESUS CHRIST is the Redeemer, and ſole Teacher, in the new man.

Of the fall of Adam; *that* JESUS CHRIST *took into his moſt glorious body the glorious body of* Adam, *and afterwards his miſeries; for what end* JESUS CHRIST *came cloathed with our fleſh; that it is in him* GOD *the Word knocks at the heart, and is the ſole Teacher of thoſe who are diſpoſed to learn of him.*

MOSES writes, that *God created man in his own image, and breathed into his noſtrils the breath of life, and man became a living ſoul.* But the moment *Adam* diſobeyed his GOD, he fell into death, GOD withdrawing the divine life which he had breathed into his noſtrils at his creation; ſeeing that GOD is ſpirit, and communicated to *Adam* his ſpirit by his breathing. This was the ſpiritual man, of the ſame nature of GOD, and his image; foraſmuch that through him

that hath called us to glory and virtue, that is JESUS CHRIST, he has again *given unto us exceeding great and precious promiſes, that we may* (again) *be partakers of the divine nature*, 2 Pet. i. 4.

It was not the animal life that GOD breathed into *Adam*'s noſtrils, for as to the terreſtrial body of *Adam* it received its life from the terreſtrial and vital ſpirits, and the aſtral man, or power and faculty of reaſoning, has its life from the aſtral ſpirit; which two ſpirits became manifeſted in *Adam* immediately upon his fall, and we, his offſpring, moſt diſtinctly perceive their operations, in what we call our mind or underſtanding. But the inward ſpiritual man, the image of GOD, was taken from him, and GOD reſumed it, according as it is ſaid, *the body returns to the earth whence it came*, Eccl. xii. 7. as to its mother, and thereby draws the ſoul into earthly and carnal affections, *and the ſpirit returns to God who gave it.* This is what has come to paſs by that death which is operated by ſin, and is the effect of it.

Here then was poor *Adam*, deſtitute of the divine image and life, by rebelling, and diſcontinuing his union with that divine ſpirit

rit by which he was united to GOD himſelf, and was in his communion: from which he rent himſelf, to become his own proprietor; and inſtead of that divine glorious body, of which he was diveſted, he became cloathed with this groſs body of death, ſtench, and rottenneſs, of which he was aſhamed, and which we carry about us, and are covered with it as with a grave or coffin, in which the ſoul lies as it were buried; for in reality this body, and this animal life is nothing elſe: he was driven out of the paradiſe of glory, where fleſh and blood cannot be admitted, and placed in this world to wander in exile and diſtreſs, that he might therein ſenſibly experience with pain and ſorrow the miſeries to which he had reduced himſelf, and involved his poſterity. But no ſooner had wretched and miſerable man brought himſelf into this ſtate, than GOD, in compaſſion and pity to the poor fallen creature, by that Word of his love which was in the beginning, and by whom all things were created, inſpoke the ſeed of the ſerpent-Bruiſer, and our bleſſed Lord and Redeemer JESUS CHRIST was promiſed to take off the ſentence of death that was pronounced, namely, *In the day thou eateſt of the fruit*

of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou ſhalt die, Gen. ii. 17. and was executed the moment of the fall of our firſt father: and which ſentence regards all his poſterity, for man no ſooner falls into himſelf, into his own propriety, than the ſpiritual man, born of the inſpoken ſeed, loſes his empire in him, and, without being regenerated by repentance, is ſeparated and withdrawn from the ſoul at the breaking off of the earthly body.

It was then, this divine Word of the divine love, in whom all the fulneſs of the godhead dwells, and who is the expreſs image of GOD, in pure grace, engaged in the redemption of mankind, and became the mediator between GOD and man: even the Son of GOD! who in JESUS CHRIST, at the appointed time, became manifeſted in the body prepared for him; and ſaid, *I know, Father, that thou heareſt me always*, John xi. 42. not that the Son of GOD is ſeparate and diſtinct from the Father, he is his love, his delight; and what he deſires; what his love aſks for, the Father always grants and does; for it is his will; and all that they deſire in whom JESUS CHRIST dwells, and is become their life, they alſo obtain, for it is the love of GOD that aſks for it.

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In this Word, the Son of GOD came at the appointed time, and took our nature upon him, both ſoul and body, even the garment wherewith ſin has covered man; in order for the ſon of man to ſuffer and die, amidſt the bittereſt pains, and the greateſt ignominy, and all this to reſcue us from that unparalleled miſery into which man had plunged himſelf by his rebellion; he was the man of ſorrows, deſpiſed and rejected of men: who bore our griefs, was wounded for our tranſgreſſions, and was bruiſed for our iniquities: the chaſtiſement of ſin was upon him, by him our peace was obtained; the iniquity of us all (in the tranſgreſſion of *Adam*) being laid upon him, and by his ſtripes are we healed: and to thoſe who receive him, the adorable Saviour and Redeemer, he gives them power to become the ſons of GOD.

This eternal Word came cloathed with our miſery, and took the ſame organs and faculties we have, and covered himſelf with the ſame mortal body which we carry about us for our puniſhment, to make himſelf communicable to us: cloathed with all our miſery he offered himſelf unto us to be our Saviour and Deliverer, and continually of-

fers to reſcue us from the deplorable captivity of ſin, and to reſtore us to the privilege of becoming the children of GOD. He is willing to re-eſtabliſh, to advance, and to put us again in the ſtate wherein GOD did create us, nay with additional glory, if we will but follow him, and go unto him who calls ſo tenderly and affectionately, *Take up thy croſs, and follow me.* For as out of love to us he did charge himſelf with the heavieſt, and voluntarily did bear that miſery to which we are neceſſarily ſubjected in this mortal life, he requires that we ſhould not make our captivity a ſcene of delights and pleaſures; that we return unto GOD, depend upon him, give back our hearts and affections to him, from whom we have alienated them, to beſtow them on mean vile creatures, and our ſenſual ſelves — and that we ſubmit ourſelves to him, who waits to heal our diſeaſes, and to reſtore us again to glory and happineſs.

This is the grace which JESUS CHRIST our Saviour has purchaſed for us: for how ſhould we have had acceſs to GOD, from whom we were fallen, and as far removed from him as heaven is from earth, if he had not deſcended to us, and made himſelf like

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unto us, that he might take us by the hand and lead us back into the divine nature? For as ſoon as a ſinner is converted and returns towards GOD, and liſtens to the voice that recals him from his wandering, he immediately takes him by the hand, and puts him in the way which leads to eternal life.

By this we ſee that what GOD juſtly requires of us is this, that we ſubmit our own ſpirit and reaſon to his precepts; that notwithſtanding the repugnancy which it finds therein, we believe him, and truſt ourſelves to him, that he ſpeaks the truth. It is the love of GOD which he ſheds into our hearts by the holy Ghoſt, that operates this faith, this confidence, and engages us to believe the truths of chriſtianity that our Lord has laid before us, and the neceſſity of regeneration, which he ſpoke of to *Nicodemus*, that great doctor of the Jews, and aſſured him that it was impoſſible to enter into the kingdom of heaven without it.

Our bleſſed Lord, in the inſtructions he gives us, doth not employ much reaſoning to convince us of the truth and equity of his doctrine. When he ſpeaks of the neceſſity of forſaking all, if one would be his diſciple, he uſes no arguments to perſuade,

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and when he ſpeaks of the neceſſity of eating his fleſh and drinking his blood if we would have eternal life, he does not explain himſelf to ſatisfy human reaſon. He was not at the pains to call back thoſe who being offended, left him; on the contrary, he only aſked his diſciples, *if they alſo would go away?* All he ſaid on that head was, *The words that I ſpeak unto you are ſpirit and life: it is the Spirit that quickeneth, the fleſh profiteth nothing.* We are therefore to embrace and receive his teaching with ſubmiſſion: then having given him a proof of our love, he afterwards enlightens our underſtanding, by that divine light which iſſues forth and diffuſes itſelf from the fire of the love of GOD (reſiding in our heart) upon our underſtanding, illuminates it, and diſcovers to it the divine myſteries; makes us know how juſt, how reaſonable and upright, the conduct of GOD is towards us, how advantageous it is to ſubmit to him, to give up and reſign ourſelves to him entirely, and to believe and follow him.

The true light iſſues from the heart, or from the inmoſt ground of the ſoul, where the divine ſun reſides that muſt enlighten the underſtanding: it is from this place,

where GOD reſides, that he darts his rays upon the underſtanding, which he illuminates. It is our hearts then that we muſt give to him, that he may become abſolute maſter and poſſeſſor thereof, if we would have our underſtanding enlightened with the true light that diſcovers divine things: without this, nor by any other means, ſhall man ever attain to the true light, therefore it is that GOD always demands the heart. *David* ſays, *Pſalm.* xxxiv. *Taſte and ſee that the Lord is good:* this is contrary to the ordinary way that man goes to work: he muſt firſt ſee a thing, examine whether it be good, and after he is ſatisfied that it is ſo, he taſtes it; but in the things of GOD we are told to taſte firſt, and then to ſee: and experience convinces us that thus it comes to paſs. GOD makes himſelf to be taſted by the heart, he draws it, makes it taſte his goodneſs and his love; and if it gives itſelf up entirely to him, and follows the attraction, though it be indiſtinct and obſcure as yet for the underſtanding, then it is the heart becomes enlightened by the effect wrought in it.

This is the reaſon why we ſee plain, and ignorant perſons flaming and filled with the love of GOD, that are ſubmiſſive and obe-

dient

dient to his will, and teſtify by their life and conduct, the earneſtneſs and purity of the divine love which inflames them; who nevertheleſs are incapable of reaſoning upon the cauſe of their love, or of aſſigning a reaſon, or making a clear deſcription of their ſtate: a reaſoner would eaſily embarraſs them: all the reaſon they can aſſign is, that they love GOD, and believe JESUS CHRIST in whom they confide, following the attraction which inclines their heart, and without heſitating, without reaſoning, they obey him. On the contrary, others ſpend their lives in reaſoning upon the juſtice and equity of living chriſtianly, the great harmony there is between reaſon and the morals of the goſpel, and remain void of the life of GOD: their heart continues cold, and they ſufficiently diſcover that it is ſtill full of the love of the world, of the creatures, and of themſelves; that their affections are earthly, by reaſon of the attachment, the care and concern they have about theſe things, and the pleaſure and ſatisfaction which they find and ſeek in them.

Hence it comes to paſs, that men of great knowledge and great genius, who have acquired to themſelves credit and authority among

among men, have formed parties, and diſpute one againſt another, while neither the one nor the other, though differing in opinion, have acquired the true ſcience of becoming children, which however is neceſſary, according to the declaration of our divine maſter, *in order to enter into the kingdom of heaven.* Quite otherwiſe, for by the multitude of their reaſonings they deviate ſtill more from ſimplicity and child-like docility, and become ſtill more unfit to receive our Saviour's teaching in faith, and in the ſenſe that he himſelf conceived the doctrines he taught. Thoſe that do embrace this ſimplicity, in acknowledging their incapacity to comprehend divine things, without the aſſiſtance of GOD's holy Spirit, have that humble diſpoſition our Lord demands in order to be taught of him.

It is an humble heart then, and deſirous to ſubmit to the yoke of our Lord, that one muſt have in order to learn of him: but when we will needs learn by ourſelves, and comprehend the holy ſcriptures by the efforts of our underſtanding, we explain and apply them according to our ideas; and give them that ſenſe that is moſt convenient and proper to ſupport what we have propoſed

poſed to ourſelves: and this diverſity of ideas creates moſt of the diſputes and differences in religion. The holy ſcripture is inſpired by GOD, and has been written by inſtruments moved thereto by the holy Spirit. It is then to that holy Spirit that it properly belongs, to give the true explication thereof; for he alone it is that can give the true meaning; *the natural man does not underſtand the things that are of the Spirit of God*, 1 Cor. ii. 14.

One finds by experience, that all that one has learned by ſpeculation and received as true, has produced nothing but an hiſtorical faith. What our Lord teaches us inwardly, compared to what we learn outwardly by the memory, is as different, or more ſo, as to learn the geography in a map, and the deſcription of a country or kingdom that one is reading; and when one goes into that country or kingdom, and travels and ſurveys with our own eyes all the places and towns, and converſes with the inhabitants, and by our own experience knows the inhabitants, their maxims, their manners, *&c.* This laſt is infinitely more real than the firſt; and one finds that the ideas which we had formed of the country by the map,

and

and deſcription, were very imperfect, and often falſe.

Our Lord ſays, *One is your maſter, even Chriſt.* It is true we may have been inſtructed from our youth up in the holy ſcriptures, and in the truths of the chriſtian religion, by thoſe that had the care of our education, by the good books that may have fallen into our hands, and by teachers that have taught us outwardly, and theſe may, in ſome meaſure, have been inſtrumental to convey ſome light into our underſtanding, and ſtored our memory with the truths of religion; but it is the Word in JESUS CHRIST alone that touches the heart: the Word that was made fleſh, ſpeaking and inſtructing us in the ground of our hearts, is quite another thing. His words are ſpirit and life! He makes the will to ſhare in the light which he imparts to the underſtanding, and engraves in the heart what he ſpeaks therein. This word penetrates into the inmoſt ground of the ſoul, and the ſoul is obliged to confeſs the truth, that the Word in JESUS CHRIST is the ſole teacher, and the one (only) maſter.

Hence it comes that ſouls in ſimplicity do receive the light of the holy Spirit, and among

among thoſe that are thus taught of GOD, there is no diſpute. They have learned of him to practiſe his inſtructions, they have given him their hearts, and had rather be obedient to what he enjoins, than to learn all the doctrines of the goſpel by art and method. They apply themſelves rather to love than to ſpeculate; rather open their hearts to be filled with the fire of divine love, than to ſtuff their heads with much ſchool learning, and with many opinions and ſyſtems. Among theſe, I ſay, we find an uniformity of ſentiments, in whatever age they lived, or with whatever ſociety or party of religion they were connected. The holy Spirit purified them from dead works, led them to true penitence and amendment of life, made them to abandon their ſins, their vices and wicked habits, and regenerated them, to the end that JESUS CHRIST might live and reign alone in them. In all this oeconomy of grace, which effects regeneration, there has been found an entire harmony in all, though they have never ſeen nor known each other. I believe it would be juſt the ſame with regard to the doctrines of religion, if we would forbear comprehending them by our ſpirit, and would believe

lieve ſimply what is revealed of them in the holy ſcripture, receiving all the paſſages that treat of them as they ſeverally open to us, even when they ſeem to contradict each other, without attempting to explain or reconcile them after our own mode. A time would come when the Spirit of GOD himſelf would give us the underſtanding of them, and would take off or explain all the difficulties. But till the time ſhall come that men ſhall ſuffer themſelves to be conducted by the Spirit of GOD, there will be nothing but diſſenſion, diverſity and confuſion. This is what GOD complains of in the infancy of the world; "Men, ſays he, will "not ſuffer themſelves to be governed by "my Spirit," *Gen.* vi.

DISCOURSE III.

The difference between the life of NATURE and the life of GRACE.

That by the fall, the holy Spirit is loſt; and that we recover it in JESUS CHRIST *by regeneration.*

IN the foregoing diſcourſe we have ſeen man entire, as GOD created him after his image and likeneſs. We have alſo ſeen how by his turning away from GOD, in which his fall conſiſted, he loſt the moſt noble part of himſelf, the ſpiritual and divine man, which the apoſtle *Paul* calls the Spirit, to which he died; and as the ſame apoſtle writes to the Chriſtians, ſpeaking of the ſtate they were in before their converſion, *and when ye were dead in your ſins and treſpaſſes*, (Eph. ii.) CHRIST has raiſed you up. He quickened them by reſtoring to them the divine life, which is that Spirit, even the new creature.

Thus

Thus in our natural fallen ſtate, we have not in us that life of GOD, as the apoſtle *Paul* alſo ſaid of the Gentiles, that is in their ſtate of unregeneracy, *they were alienated from the life of God*, Eph. iv. 18. We live only an animal life, in the ſenſual man. The greater part of men are ſlaves of that life, ſeek only to gratify their ſenſual appetites and paſſions, after a manner a thouſand times worſe than the brute beaſts, wallowing in the gratifications which they endeavour to give immoderately to their brutiſh ſenſes, and are ignorant of any other life.

And thoſe that are more reaſonable, and under ſome reſtraint, live only in the ſpirit of the elements: and among theſe are they whom we call men of genius: they correct by the moral rational nature, the other groſſer nature, more or leſs; they do not leave the brutal nature the entire ſway and dominion over them: they are addicted to the more refined paſſions, which they call the paſſions of the mind, and is the effect of the aſtral, or elementary ſpirit, upon that which the apoſtle rightly calls the ſoul, as the former he calls the body. Thoſe, I ſay, that are the moſt refined, are addicted to the human arts and ſciences, they become ingenious men, men

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of learning, and men of great ſpirit; they can preſent us with ſome appearances of ſuperficial virtue, and abſtain from the groſſer vices, for which the heathens had a horror; and all this by the influence which the aſtral ſpirit has upon the ſoul.

Such men can appear moſt virtuous and wiſe; inſomuch that they may, according to their degree of virtue, paſs for very good Chriſtians, though they are not as yet in any meaſure regenerated, their virtues being merely human, acknowledging the doctrines, and practiſing the ceremonies eſtabliſhed in the chriſtian religion, which they profeſs externally, and therein behave themſelves religiouſly: they want nothing either in their own eyes, or in the eyes of others that are like themſelves: they know no other chriſtianity, nor other Chriſtians; for as to the ſallies of vices and paſſions which in theſe men are moſt vigorous and lively, and which often puts forth their fruit outwardly, whatever care they take to conceal them, by endeavouring conſtantly to ſave appearances; theſe are excuſed, and covered with the name of human weakneſſes: but GOD frequently permits thoſe men that appear the moſt virtuous, to commit ſuch groſs

faults,

faults, that they ſufficiently diſcover that fund of corruption and rottenneſs which they are at ſuch pains to conceal.

They have moreover at leaſt one favourite paſſion that rules and governs them, which thoſe that know them intimately do ſufficiently diſcover; and GOD permits this in order to undeceive them, and others alſo, and to juſtify himſelf, and to make appear that his Spirit in CHRIST alone can make true Chriſtians, who have the reality in them, and not barely falſe appearances of it on the outſide.

That they who are in the fleſh, that is, in the natural animal man, actuated by the ſpirit of this world (or of the elements) and not by the Spirit of GOD, cannot pleaſe GOD: and that they that have not the Spirit of CHRIST in them, are none of his; is manifeſt throughout all the holy ſcripture, eſpecially in the epiſtles of the apoſtle *Paul*. But in reality it is here the learned rationaliſt ſhews that he ſtops ſhort, and underſtands little or nothing of the things that are ſpiritual and divine; and yet moſt divines, by their teaching, ſeem of opinion, we have no other light nor knowledge, but that which reaſon affords us; indeed the greateſt

part

part of them experience none other: and I remember talking one day with a very learned and noted divine, eminent for his wiſdom, about the operations of the Spirit of GOD in us, he told me, that what I called the light of the holy Spirit, was nothing elſe but the light of reaſon.

In order to clear up and explain this matter, it is neceſſary to ſee what it is that we call reaſon in man. This is ſo much the more needful, as reaſon at preſent is the grand idol and the god, whom the wiſe and judicious men of this world do adore; they knowing nothing more in man; ſince by this faculty it is that they diſtinguiſh him from the brute beaſts, ſaying, that man is a rational creature.

Here is a very lame definition; although proper one, and, alas! too true, in the fallen ſtate of man, dead as he is, a ſtranger to the divine life, and without the birth of that creature which is born of water and of the Spirit, and with which the ſoul can only enter into the kingdom of GOD. In this ſtate the definition may take place; and ſtill better, if we ſay, that man is a creature endued with moral reaſon, by a light that ſhines in every man that is born into the world,

world, and thereby he is more enlightened and more refined than beaſts, which diſcover by their operations and inſtinct that they are not quite deſtitute of natural reaſon, provided we do not blind our eyes by falſe and ſubtile reaſonings, in deviating entirely from ſimplicity, by a vain philoſophy that darkens and perplexes the mind, and is in reality ridiculous: for example, from whence comes it that a dog, or other animal, has faculties to be taught, trained, and diſciplined by man? If we judge naturally without refining, and according to what is obvious and plain before our eyes, is not this a demonſtration of reaſoning in the beaſts? But vain philoſophy hurries us blindfold from one extravagance to another, to which we give the name of wiſdom and learning.

Let us ſee where reaſon has its ſeat. Reaſon, or reaſoning, is an operation of the underſtanding, or its fruit and production, which reaſons upon the ſubject which the light of the underſtanding preſents, and this determines and carries the will to what it finds reaſonable. This is all well, provided the underſtanding, where images and ideas do preſent themſelves, was itſelf enlightened

by the ſpiritual man, the inward and divine man, the new creature, which is the image of GOD, JESUS CHRIST in us, terms that all ſignify the ſame thing. This divine man, or image of GOD, which, as we have already obſerved, was loſt by the fall, ought to be ſovereign Lord and King of the underſtanding, and to communicate his light thereto, as the moon and other planets receive theirs from the ſun: but having loſt this divine man, our underſtanding, which is the eye of the ſoul, is obſcured with darkneſs, and has no light left but what is communicated to it by the influence of outward nature, of which our natural man is formed or created, which being infected with the malignity of Satan by the fall, the influences and lights our underſtanding receives from them muſt needs be very corrupt.

Therefore it is the apoſtle ſays, *Col.* i. 21. *Ye were ſtrangers to Chriſt, and enemies in your underſtanding.* Thus the corrupt underſtanding is very far from being, or giving us the ſupernatural light of the holy Spirit; ſince in order to be made capable of receiving that, the new birth of the new man, created according to GOD in righteouſneſs and true holineſs, muſt neceſſarily precede;

precede; and until this is operated and formed in us, we are ſtrangrrs to GOD, notwithſtanding all our learning in the letter of the holy ſcripture, which to the natural man is merely ſpeculative, and altogether unfruitful, and brings no change on the heart or affections. This is plain and evident, ſince the moſt learned, the beſt reaſoners and theoriſts, are not the moſt holy and godly perſons, nor the moſt diſengaged from themſelves, from their paſſions, and the riches of this world; all which evidently ſhows the inſufficiency of reaſon, to operate a real converſion to GOD.

It is only the Spirit of the outward nature then that enlightens man in this corrupt ſtate: hence proceeds the multitude of falſe reaſonings, their deceit and ſubtilty to perplex and obſcure the truth; the contradiction and uncertainty, the little reality in practiſe, that is to be found among thoſe that exalt ſo highly, and make their god of reaſon. Reaſoning cannot hinder and prevent the diſorderly paſſions of pride, ambition, avarice and ſenſuality, from geting the better of practice, in thoſe that make ſo great a ſhow of this fine reaſon, and its excellency: reaſon, I ſay, which is more and

more corrupted, and darkened by the aſcendency that thoſe paſſions has got over the preſent race of men.

Yet ſo great is the degeneracy, that among the learned, and people of the moſt decent appearance, nothing more perfect than the light of reaſon is known: they even take this for a ſtate of regeneration; and the war which theſe perſons wage, by their own ſtrength, in ſtifling and ſuppreſſing paſſions manifeſtly groſs and criminal, they take for the Chriſtian warfare; which nevertheleſs, if you narrowly obſerve it, is nothing but a very pitiful conflict, which has no other aim but to preſent you with the life of an honeſt heathen, exempt from groſs vices. Here all this labour terminates! and if, together with this, the outward ceremonies of religion are practiſed, you forſooth ſee an accompliſhed Chriſtian! The merits of JESUS CHRIST will ſupply all deficiencies: men neither know nor deſire any more.

O how difficult is it for ſuch perſons to enter into a true converſion, and the new birth; but if they will not flatter themſelves continually, and will give ear a little to the voice of conſcience, by taking a little heed to their conduct, and examining it before

GOD,

GOD, they will ſoon be convinced of the dangerous and deluſive ſtate they are in; and if they are faithful to that voice, and do not ſtifle it by their falſe and flattering reaſonings, they will ſoon be put, by the admonitions of that faithful conſcience, into the way and beginning of a true converſion, and into a more ſerious and aſſiduous conflict againſt the hidden vices, which that conſcience will diſcover to them more and more, according to their fidelity in following its motions; until it lead them into a more profound knowledge of themſelves, and draw down the divine light of luminous faith into their ſoul, which enlightens and enriches that ſoul with powers, virtues and gifts preparatory to the new birth, which as yet they have not attained. For in this ſtate man is ſtill in himſelf, although filled with gifts and graces in his ſoul, which he ſtill poſſeſſes in propriety, and has not yet loſt, which however is neceſſary, according to that ſaying of JESUS CHRIST, *he that loſeth his life ſhall find it.*

It is time then to ſeek after that moſt ſure, and moſt pure light that will give us this life; by bringing us to true penitence, and deſire of amendment of life, to embrace

the ſecure way of renouncing our paſſions, and ourſelves, as our Lord JESUS CHRIST both taught and practiſed himſelf, by a life of poverty, denied to the pleaſures and gratifications of the earthly life: a way that alone diſpoſes and renders us capable of regaining the true divine light of the holy Spirit; for then GOD, by a ſecret attraction in the center of the ſoul, which is the place where the new man begins to ſhoot forth, and to make himſelf felt, forms the ſpiritual man JESUS CHRIST in us, and he raiſes up that divine light again in us, which will communicate to us, and change all our affections from earthly into heavenly and divine, if we continue faithful in ſuffering ourſelves to be ſtript, and ſeparated, from the ſenſual life of the old *Adam*, according to all the extent of the attraction of the holy Spirit, which grows and reſumes vigour and authority over us, according as we forſake and loſe our ſenſual life, ſuffering it to be deſtroyed, and our ſouls to be ſeparated from it, by entering into pure faith whereſoever the Spirit draws us.

This light of the holy Spirit is not as men imagine, a foreign light, a fanatical enthuſiaſm; it is the life and light of our ſoul,

which

which was given it at its creation, and which GOD breathed into man's noſtrils: every other life is a foreign life to the ſoul, and the ſource of that depravation and corruption that reigns in the world: and though this elementary life, and the light of temporary nature (or reaſon) make a great ſhow in the world, by communicating to men their learning, prudence, ſubtilty of ſpirit, and worldly wiſdom; its original nevertheleſs is from the ſpirit of this world, which the apoſtle *Paul* ſays, 1 *Cor.* xi. 12. *he had not received*, and which *vaniſheth away*, Jam. iv. 14. nay it is the only life and light known by the people of the world, or of which they are ſenſible, who are ignorant of the operation of the Spirit of GOD in them: how virtuous and wiſe ſoever theſe may appear outwardly, how learned ſoever they may be, they are children of this world, and ſtrangers to GOD, and to his experimental and only ſaving knowledge, though they confeſs him outwardly, read the holy ſcriptures, and practiſe diligently the exerciſes of the religion they profeſs.

From hence we plainly diſcover the neceſſity of our ſouls being ſeparated from the old *Adam*, or ſelf, which we poſſeſs in pro-

priety, to the end that by dying to it, the new man may again reſume his right, and that by receiving the life of JESUS CHRIST, he may reign in us, and ſubject the ſoul to himſelf, being purified, as I have ſaid, by the death and deſtruction of its propriety, which it has loſt, and is no more to be found in this new life of the Spirit, by which it has given itſelf up to GOD, who now governs this ſoul as its ſubject, that by the life of the Spirit now communicated to it, receives a hundred fold for what it had loſt, and likewiſe finds itſelf again, but in GOD, and for him only. He then that ſhall loſe his ſoul, ſhall find it in life eternal, even in this life. *Amen*, JESUS! thy words are true, and truth itſelf.

But the enemy of mankind, fearing to loſe his prey, flatters men in their ſecurity, and perſuades them that the knocks and calls of the Spirit of GOD at the heart are fancies, imaginations, vapours, melancholy, and the like, from which one muſt diſſipate and ſeek to divert himſelf; that one ſhall become ridiculous, abſurd, and unprofitable to his fellow-creatures, and loſe all honour and reputation, if he follows theſe fantaſtical imaginations.

Here

Here you ſee how our corrupt reaſon, that fine thing, is the moſt proper inſtrument Satan makes uſe of, by a thouſand ſubtile reaſonings, and plauſible and probable demonſtrations, to hinder us from opening our hearts to the Spirit of grace, which ſeeks day and night to be admitted into them, in order to ſave us, and bring us back from a courſe of wandering, wherein we walk with ſo much aſſurance; and in which the enemy endeavours to keep us, that while we preſume to be in the way of ſalvation, he may lead us on ſoftly into hell, where he thus carries millions of men, as it were in a coach. May GOD preſerve us from being of that number, and make us attentive to his voice that cries in the ground of our hearts, *Awake, thou that ſleepeſt, and Chriſt ſhall give thee light*; and he will infallibly do it if men deſire it, and do not reject the inward admonitions which the Spirit of grace never fails to vouchſafe them, by diſturbing them in their falſe repoſe; if they liſten thereto, and do not quench it by the continual diſtractions, outward occupations, and falſe reaſonings which the enemy of their ſalvation ſuggeſts to them in their underſtanding, in order to diſſipate the fears which,

the Spirit of grace raiſes in their conſcience, to ſhew and convince them of their bad ſtate, and to incite them to ſeek after GOD, and by his grace to put themſelves in a better.

O man, obſerve at leaſt this artifice, you that have a ſpark of the fear of GOD, and deſire to be ſaved: do not ſuffer yourſelf to be ſeduced, but follow the voice of that Shepherd who will ſhew you the way of peace, will teach you inwardly, and according as you live with greater attention to that ſmall ſtill voice, will deliver you by degrees from all your prejudices, from all the deluſions of Satan, of ſelf-love, and of your own reaſon; from the world, and its adherents; and will guide you into the only ſhort and ſure means that leads to ſalvation, by a true knowledge of yourſelf and of your GOD, who deſires ſo ardently to draw you to him by his grace, and to manifeſt his kingdom within you, and there to take up his abode; as our merciful King and Saviour has told you in his goſpel, and ſtill tells you, offering himſelf inceſſantly to enter into your heart, and to reſide therein, if you will but open it to him.

Do not retard this happineſs any longer, and you ſhall find in your own experience, that theſe are not bare words, but truths and realities, more than all that can be told you about them; which is nothing in compariſon of what GOD will do for you, and with which he will reward you, if you follow his attraction: He will give you, not a ſpeculative and barren knowledge of the truths of the Chriſtian religion, and its myſteries (which produces no love for GOD, and only a cold charity for our neighbour) but a living faith working by love. Your heart ſhall be inflamed more and more by that ſecret commerce of flaming love between the ſoul and him, which by its ſacred fire will conſume all your vices and imperfections; transform you into other men; of carnal and earthly, render you ſpiritual and divine; make you die to the world and its vain amuſements, and live for him and in him; fill you with joy in yourſelves by the holy Ghoſt; and make you in this life begin the ever-bleſſed life of eternity. This is the grace which GOD offers to you, and which I wiſh you, as one who has by the divine bounty received a foretaſte of it.

DIS-

DISCOURSE IV.

Of the Miracles of the Old and New Teſtament, and how the will of GOD may be known.

Miracles of great ſhow are for men in a ſenſual ſtate; men ought to be on their guard with reſpect to outward miracles, thoſe at preſent being wrought in ſpirit, and in the ſecret of mens hearts; the power and will of GOD *diſplays itſelf in the center of the ſoul.*

THE more groſs, and the more ſenſual and exterior men have been, the more ſignal and pompous have the miracles been, that GOD has employed to convert them, and manifeſt himſelf unto them: and the more ſpiritual they become, the leſs GOD makes uſe of thoſe ſignal miracles to eſtabliſh his church.

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This is manifeſt under the Jewiſh oeconomy, when GOD eſtabliſhed and founded that church: as that people were extremely groſs, ſenſual, and altogether outward, he wrought ſhining miracles in their favour in *Egypt*, and in the wilderneſs. Thereafter they conquered the land of *Canaan* with equal miracles, and after a moſt wonderful manner. Thus it was that GOD authoriſed and eſtabliſhed that firſt external church. The divine ſervice he preſcribed them was directed to the ſame end, and the external ceremonies were therein multiplied, conformable to their ſtate, for they had need of them, being incapable of ſpiritual things.

When our Lord JESUS CHRIST came into the world, he eſtabliſhed his religion, and likewiſe authoriſed it by the miracles he wrought; which though ſplendid, as well as thoſe which his apoſtles performed after him, yet came far ſhort in point of ſhow to thoſe that *Moſes* had done in *Egypt*, and in the deſart. The paſſage through the Red-ſea, and through *Jordan*, were of unparallelled pomp and ſtatelineſs. Our bleſſed Saviour wrought miracles equally noble and marvellous, but not in that ſtately manner, to the end his diſciples might not reſt in

the exterior. Our Lord wrought only as many as were neceſſary to diſengage from the Jewiſh precepts thoſe that believed in him, and to authoriſe his being the Meſſiah, and the Saviour of the world. The ignominy, the contempt and death which he ſuffered, as well as his apoſtles, have beſides tarniſhed the luſtre of his miracles in the eyes of men who have regarded only the exterior; and the virtue of his Spirit operating in their hearts, was the efficacious means that he employed in order to convert men: and even thoſe miracles which he and his apoſtles wrought outwardly, did very quickly ceaſe.

At preſent, that his reign is to be eſtabliſhed in Spirit, we ſee ſtill fewer of thoſe outward miracles appear: all his wonderful work is done in ſecret, and in the interior of hearts in ſilence. The things that have moſt ſhow, and that make the greateſt noiſe outwardly, are not thoſe that are of greateſt value in the ſight of GOD, nor wrought by his pure Spirit: and the more the reign of the holy Spirit is extended and eſtabliſhed in hearts, the leſs ſhall thoſe men who live only in their ſenſes, find wherewithal to be convinced and ſatisfied by their ſenſes, and

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their reaſon, of the truth and reality of the operation of the holy Spirit in the heart, who nevertheleſs operates ſecretly in the inward ground of ſouls, and works miracles much greater in effect, than all thoſe that made ſuch a ſplendid appearance outwardly in former times.

But we muſt have our internal eyes enlightened by the internal light of the holy Spirit, to be in a condition to perceive thoſe miracles which it operates in ourſelves and others. We muſt for that purpoſe live by faith, we muſt give ourſelves altogether to God's diſpoſal, in order to be capable thereof. We live in an age wherein the greateſt wonders are wrought that ever yet appeared; but all is in the ſecret of the ſoul: the eyes of the fleſh ſee none of them, and human reaſon comprehends nothing about them.

The reaſon is, becauſe God deſigns to eſtabliſh a pure church, diſengaged from all that is ſenſual and carnal: he will have all the members of this church to worſhip him in ſpirit, and in truth, and reality: he will himſelf live in them by his holy Spirit. There are many that are in the way of becoming ſuch worſhippers, and members of

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this pure and ſpiritual church, but few that have attained to that purity which the ſpirit of grace requires, in order to reſide in them continually: he viſits them, invites them, prepares them! The work is begun in many, and will be perfected in all thoſe that will become tractable and humble, and ſuffer themſelves to be ſtript of their own ſpirit and will, yea of all the old man, and all his appendages.

As this church is quite of another kind than the preceding ones, and much more diſengaged from every thing that ſtrikes the ſenſes, and all that is exterior, it is not ſurpriſing that GOD ſhould likewiſe employ another manner and other means for the eſtabliſhment of it; and that he acts contrary to every thing that the reaſon and ſpirit of man is able to comprehend and approve of; that he does not make uſe of miracles which have a ſplendid appearance outwardly, nor of the extraordinary and marvellous, that attract the admiration of ſenſual men, and aſtoniſh them. This to me ſeems clear, becauſe our Lord, *Matt.* xxiv. ſpeaking of his laſt coming, and of the end of the world, warns us not to believe thoſe that ſhall then come in his name, doing

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great miracles, and ſuch as ſhould deceive the very elect, if it were poſſible: and for a mark that theſe are falſe prophets, he gives thoſe miraculous operations which before were the means by which he authoriſed his own miſſion, and that of his apoſtles: and in another place he anſwers thoſe that ſhall ſay to him, *Have not we propheſied in thy name, and in thy name caſt out devils, and in thy name done many wonderful works?* He anſwers them, *I never knew you*, Matt. vii. 22, 23. This indeed is very remarkable. Our Lord does not ſay, that in the laſt time of which he ſpeaks, he will ſend his ſervants that ſhall do much more glorious miracles, even ſuch as ſhall far ſurpaſs thoſe of the falſe prophets; no by no means: he barely ſays, *Matt.* xxiv. 25, 26. *Believe them not, go not forth to ſee them, to run after them, neither into the deſert, nor here nor there: The kingdom of God is within you*, Luke xvii. 21. It is there that the power and efficacy of the Spirit of grace will cauſe itſelf to be felt; the internal ſpirit, the holy Ghoſt, which will teach you and lead you into all truth, will preſerve you from all deluſion. It is there then that we muſt again enter, and

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wait till our Lord ſhall diſplay his reign within us.

Bleſſed are they that perſevere and wait for him there! and who, amidſt the temptations, doubts, darkneſs and terrors they have to undergo and ſuſtain, are not deceived, and do not ſuffer themſelves to be drawn away after that which has a ſplendid and fine appearance, and is outwardly aſtoniſhing. GOD himſelf will reveal himſelf to them, and will be their treaſure and their portion, and will by himſelf thus reward their perſeverance.

O bleſſed is he whom thou makeſt to approach unto thee, that he may dwell in thy courts; they ſhall be ſatisfied with the riches of thy houſe, and of thy holy temple, Pſal. lxv. 4. that ſanctuary, that temple is in us. Let us not ſeek for it elſewhere. It is there where GOD manifeſts himſelf, and whence he is pleaſed to communicate himſelf, eſpecially in theſe laſt times: let us go inceſſantly and ſeek him there: let us diſengage ourſelves from the diſtractions that hinder us, and we ſhall find him without fail.

Teach me thy will, for thou art my God; let thy Spirit lead me, Pſal. cxliii. 10. This is the prayer of the holy prophet *David*, and

and that of all ſouls deſirous to renounce their own will, knowing by their experience that it is quite naught, and that the will of GOD alone is good. This gives them a ſincere deſire to fulfil the divine will. But the ſame experience ſhewing them, that they are incapable of knowing and diſtinguiſhing that will from their own, or from things that are repreſented to their minds under a moſt ſpecious appearance, as being infallibly the will of GOD; amidſt the diſtruſt they have of themſelves, and of all other ſpirits, they beg of him *that his good Spirit may lead them.*

O how neceſſary indeed is this petition, becauſe of the many voices that call themſelves the voice of GOD; that under the moſt glaring appearances outwardly, and inwardly by moſt lively ſenſations, covered with a veil of the moſt flaming zeal, incite us to believe they are the voice of GOD, and his will, that invite us to undertake ſuch and ſuch things, and perſuade us that GOD requires it of us. All theſe caſes, which are numberleſs in their diverſity as well as extent, cauſe abundance of pains, inquietudes, and cares to a ſoul truly deſirous to do the will of GOD, and which finds no certainty

tainty in herſelf, nor light enough to determine and aſcertain her that the thing which now preſents itſelf is the will of GOD, which ſhe ſhould endeavour to execute, or that it is not.

This is none of the leaſt vexations to a ſoul that has no other deſire but to live for GOD, and to be his without reſerve; for I do not ſpeak here of the will of GOD in general, that invites us to repentance, to ceaſe from doing evil, and to learn to do well, to abſtain from ſin and vice, and to practiſe virtue: for it is paſt all doubt and heſitation that we muſt abſtain from the one, and practiſe the other, to wit, virtue and goodneſs. But I ſpeak here of particular caſes that occur daily unlooked for, to a ſoul devoted to GOD, and deſirous more and more to depend upon him in all things; to whom there is preſented a thouſand little things, and ſome of importance, which in themſelves are neither good nor bad, and become ſuch only by the principle that ſets them at work: I ſpeak of things that often have the appearance of being very good and profitable for the glory of GOD, and the good or ſalvation of our neighbour, or our own ſpiritual advancement: it is in theſe things

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that it is often difficult to diſcern which is the will of GOD, and to diſtinguiſh it from that which has only the appearance of it.

Well diſpoſed ſouls would fain acquire a certainty in thoſe things after different manners. Some of theſe take their certainty, on which they determine themſelves, from the counſel that is given them, or the deciſion of a perſon in whom they confide, and whom they believe to be in a condition of knowing the will of GOD better than themſelves. Others ground themſelves on ſome diſtinct word which is ſpoken to them internally, and makes itſelf to be underſtood by ſome impreſſion on their internal ſenſes, which they take, though falſely, to be the inward man; and the voice that pronounces theſe words, they take for the voice of GOD. Others caſt lots, and thereby determine themſelves. In all theſe ways of ſeeking to know the will of GOD, there may be ſomething that is good, and therefore they are not to be rejected. I believe their certainty or truth depends on the diſpoſition of the perſon that wants to know the will of GOD. Nevertheleſs there may be a ſtrong mixture of deluſion therein, as daily experience teſtifies.

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I am of opinion therefore that the infallible way of knowing the will of GOD, is, firſt to have a heart diſengaged from every other deſire and intention, but to offer up ones ſelf without reſerve to that holy will, without any other view than to follow it, without regard to profit or any intereſt whatever: in a word, we muſt lay down for a foundation, a will entirely free from all manner of bias, that has nothing but GOD alone, and his will, purely and ſolely in view. Taking this foundation for granted, it will be eaſy for a ſoul, on all ſorts of occaſions, to know the will of GOD, or what he requires of her: if ſhe gives up herſelf to his providence in outward things, or ſuffers ſecond cauſes to act, taking from the hand of GOD what happens by means of the creatures, or from events that often fall out unforeſeen: if beſide this, ſhe takes heed to the profound and ſecret bias or inſtinct of her heart, what it inclines her to: if it is a perſon already advanced, this inſtinct of the heart will not fail her; for it is her inmoſt ground where GOD reſides, that inclines her, and ſhe will find by experience that GOD will direct by his providence, or manage all things from without in ſuch manner, as that the attraction or

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inſtinct of her inmoſt ground may have its effect. She will wait patiently until all is unravelled, will precipitate nothing, and will remain equally poiſed and free from every deſire and every inclination. GOD often, in order to purify her, and to make her flexible and pliant, will permit the face of affairs to change many times, ſo that ſhe is is toſſed on all ſides, tempted and afflicted every manner of way; that a thouſand contrary events befal her, which ſeem to operate quite the contrary of what ſhe knew, and what her inward bias inclined her to. But if ſhe remains in tranquillity, comfortleſs, and reſigned to all, always in the intention of renouncing all ſelf-will, in order to follow the will of GOD without choice or reſerve; GOD will conduct her ſecurely, and will himſelf accompliſh that holy will which ſhe deſires, and is the only motive why ſhe has given up herſelf, and is reſigned to all events.

But let us take good heed to ourſelves: let us preſent ourſelves before GOD with ſincerity, and without hypocriſy! We that ſay inceſſantly, O that I knew the will of GOD, I would obey it cheerfully! Let us examine ourſelves, I ſay, we who pretend

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to have ſo great a deſire to know it, who aſk it at others in the counſel we would fain have them to give us? If we will do juſtice againſt ourſelves, ſhall we not find that we have ſome ſecret influence that puſhes us on? We would perhaps fain ſhake off the yoke of a croſs which is too heavy to bear; we ſhun contempt and loſs; we covet ſome advantage, either with regard to temporal or ſpiritual things; a thouſand ſubtile views of ſelf-intereſt creep into that which we deſire to do, or that we are afraid of, and from which we would fain excuſe ourſelves. GOD alone in the bottom of the heart will abundantly diſcover to us in ſilence the wiles of our own heart, if we have nothing but GOD only, and the accompliſhment of his holy will in view.

But in truth, if we would learn to know it, what purity of intention, what ſeparation from ourſelves muſt we not have? What an entire paſſivity and death of every deſire of our own, even with reſpect to the beſt things? A total ſacrifice, entire and without reſerve, with regard to time and eternity, is what puts us in a diſpoſition that that holy will may be perfectly accompliſhed in us, as JESUS CHRIST has taught us to pray, that

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his will may be done on earth as it is in heaven.

How many overſights and falſe ſteps are made in this point, with the beſt intentions in the world? but if we enquire into the cauſe, it will be found that we have had our own intereſt in view, and that it has mixed in the affair: I ſay our own ſpiritual intereſt, that zeal, that ſenſibility, and that reliſh in the internal ſenſes that does ordinarily ſeduce them: ſelf-deſire to do ſomething for the glory of God, in which deſire that of being ſomewhat, and of making ſome figure in ſpiritual matters in ones own eyes, and thoſe of others, is ſecretly the principal motive that ſets us at work; to which may be joined a thouſand ſuggeſtions of Satan, under pious pretexts; alſo deluſions of virtuous perſons, who without knowing it hurry us on to do ſomething that has a glittering appearance, but which has for its principle, not the attraction of the Spirit of God, but our own ſpirit.

A ſoul therefore free from all deſire, that cleaves to God alone, and deſires nothing but him, and the accompliſhment of his will by his holy Spirit in us, is what is neceſſary in order to do or to know the will of God.

Secondly, to guard againſt precipitation, in accompliſhing or doing what we believe to be the will of GOD; but to leave providence to act by outward events: this conduct will defend us againſt deluſion, and put us in a condition to do and ſuffer that holy will, and give us the true peace of the inmoſt ground, which we find in the divine order, or in the ſituation wherein we are at the preſent moment, in order of that holy will to which we have devoted ourſelves without reſerve.

The ſouls that have thus given up themſelves to GOD, and to his will, without reſerve, do not eſtimate things according as they are in themſelves, their excellency, ſanctity, or ſublimity. The leaſt trifling action, the moſt common to which the will of GOD applies them by the order of his providence, they prefer infinitely to the moſt pompous and ſhining atchievements. As for example, they would chooſe rather to lead a ſimple and common life, and to be employed in ſome lawful work or vulgar occupation at home, in the divine will and order, than to go upon a miſſion to preach the goſpel, with the beſt intention of their own, or at the perſuaſion of others. Their profound

profound attraction within, will give them to know what the divine call points at, by inclining thereto: but for want of following that attraction, or center, we often take the falſe for the true, becauſe the falſe has a greater ſhew, and gives more gratification to our ſenſitive appetites, or our nature, which is covetous of ſpiritual reliſhes, or what we take to be ſuch: we are not willing to die to all theſe things, that we may live in ſpirit to GOD; which however is abſolutely neceſſary.

For thoſe then whoſe hearts are ſtill divided, who have views about themſelves, about their own intereſt, and a thouſand reſerves which they will not yet ſacrifice to GOD; as to thoſe, GOD winks at many things, in order to become, by degrees, maſter of their hearts: he manages ſome good diſpoſition that he perceives in them: he often preſerves them from giving into that which is moſt hurtful, by permitting them that which is not the beſt; and they often take that which GOD bears with, to be his will. Thus it is that GOD deals with much long-ſuffering and condeſcendence towards men, ſeeking to draw them after him with ſo much love. But the misfortune is,

that men are ſo blind, ſo full of ſelf-love, and their own intereſt, that they will not know that there is any hurt in all this; and take the ſuccour, and forbearance of GOD, the protection they often experience by the often diverting of miſchief from falling on their heads, and the being preſerved therefrom; and their being inclined to what is leſs evil in the ſight of GOD, by the exhortation of their conſcience, than that which they otherwiſe would have done; they take all theſe things for ſo many tokens that they are in high favour with GOD, are his darlings, and that he conducts them according to his will. But in which they are much miſtaken; ſince what GOD does for them is only out of great pity and condeſcenſion, in hopes that they will amend, and be entirely converted unto him, and not ſuffer themſelves to be extremely blinded by their ſelf-love, in flattering themſelves with the goodneſs of their ſtate.

As for thoſe ſouls that are ſincere, and deſirous to live according to the will of GOD, and to do and ſuffer it on all occaſions, but are not yet ſufficiently advanced in the interior paths, ſo as to diſtinguiſh the attraction of the center, where the ſtill voice ſpeaks,

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by inclining the heart in a profound and delicate manner, to diſengage and ſeparate it from every thing that employs our outward ſenſes and comprehenſion; theſe, I ſay, cannot walk more ſecurely than by giving up themſelves to providence, that it may ſteer their courſe. It will direct all things for their advancement, and be the will of God to them. The leſs they ſtrive to know it by their own ſpirit and diſcernment, the more care will that providence take of them; the more ſimply and humbly they behave themſelves, without affecting or ſeeking after any thing extraordinary, continuing in the duty which their ſtation and condition engages them to; diſcharging the ſame faithfully according to the will of God, which they know; the more ſecurely will they advance in a continual renunciation of themſelves through a thouſand difficulties and ſtumbling-blocks, that thwart and oppoſe their own ſpirit, which often repreſents to them certain ſtates wherein they would have fewer hindrances, and more helps for their perfection and ſpiritual advancement. If they offer up and refer all theſe repreſentations to God and his providence, and thereby try and examine if it be his will that

they ſhould alter their condition; and at the ſame time keep themſelves paſſive, waiting till GOD himſelf direct and conduct all things; if they perſevere in expectation of his help in the things that pinch them, they ſhall experience *that thoſe that truſt in him are never aſhamed*, Pſal. xxv. 2. that it is not in vain that they have put their confidence in him, and that he will conduct all their affairs far more wiſely, and better than they ſhould have dared to have hoped for: their heart will rejoice, and be fortified in confidence and love towards him.

And in caſe it be neceſſary, GOD will not ſuffer them to be without a faithful and experienced friend, to aſſiſt and counſel them according as their ſtate requires, if they are humble and ſelf-denied enough to believe him. This is a great gift and grace of GOD, which he vouchſafes thoſe whom he would advance quickly in the way of perfection. But it muſt be GOD that gives ſuch a friend, without which, if we take one of our own chooſing, and that has not grace to counſel us aright, he will be more hurtful than profitable to us.

As for thoſe extraordinary ways which ſome make uſe of to know the will of GOD,

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and to regulate their conduct by distinct and internal words; though God should vouchsafe them in the beginning by the ministration of good angels; it is very dangerous however to rest in them: he that does it may fall into a thousand illusions. For though they are good while they proceed from good spirits, and it is the duty of the soul to receive them with humility, and to make that use of them that pleases God; yet so it is, that the soul has reason to be much upon her guard, not to covet these things, but to get beyond them, and to cleave to God alone; for such words may proceed from bad spirits, and thus many souls are deceived.

God grant us humble hearts, disengage us from our own self-will, and from all temporal interests and desires; dispose us to receive his pure love into our hearts, and teach us himself by his holy Spirit to do his will. It is thou alone that canst do it, O Lord Jesus, *Amen.*

DISCOURSE V.

Of the union of the church of JESUS CHRIST, and of the true religion.

The re-eſtabliſhing the image of GOD *in us is the foundation of religion which* JESUS CHRIST *operates: of the ſpiritual union of the children of* GOD, *for which every one ought to prepare himſelf by the extirpation of all ſelfiſhneſs, and of the root of vices: when the reign of* GOD *is in us, we arrive at union, and in the perſon that ſubmits himſelf wholly to* GOD, *he eſtabliſhes the union which is not made by any external thing but in* GOD.

THE apoſtle *Paul* ſays, *that none can lay any other foundation but* JESUS CHRIST, 1 *Cor.* iii. 11. it is CHRIST in us that is the new creature, as himſelf tells *Nicodemus*; *if a man is not born again, he cannot ſee the kingdom of God*, John iii. 3.

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The foundation of our Chriſtian religion then is no other thing but regeneration, which conſiſts in dying to the old man, that we may live to the new. It is to become a new man, *created after God in righteouſneſs and true holineſs*, Eph. iv. 24. This new man is none other than JESUS CHRIST that is formed in us, that changes us ſo, that we are renewed after his image: we thereby render to GOD the juſtice that is due to him in reſtoring to him the uſurpations we have made upon him, as well with reſpect to ourſelves, in becoming our own proprietors, as in challenging to ourſelves a privilege over all the other creatures, and deſiring to diſpoſe of them according to our own will and choice. In reſtoring all this to him, and entering again into our dependance on him, we do him the juſtice that is due to him, and thereby give him an opportunity that the new man may be created in us. This renovation then is the foundation and ſcope of all religion; it is what GOD aims at in all he propoſes to us in the goſpel, and all the holy ſcripture; and it is certain, that provided he attains this end of reviving his image in us, which is JESUS CHRIST the new man, it is all he requires.

It is to accompliſh this work that he invites us ſo tenderly to come unto him: *Come unto me*, ſays JESUS CHRIST, *Matt.* xi. 28. and ſearch the ſcriptures carefully, it is they that teſtify of me. But *you will not come unto me that you may have life*, John v. 39, 40. it is I alone that can give you that ſpirit of life, and create again in you the new man. We ſee that all that our divine Saviour propoſes to us in the goſpel, hath no other aim but to engage us to deny ourſelves and our propriety, that we may come to him, and give ourſelves to him, as unto our liege Lord and Sovereign. All that ſhould make the object of our belief, or of our faith, is in JESUS CHRIST, embracing and receiving him in us, as our Rewarder and Saviour; it is by him that we recover life, and without him we cannot but remain in death, and in the bondage of ſin, for he alone is our Deliverer.

No Chriſtian, in my opinion, can contradict this truth, which is ſo plain and manifeſt in all the holy ſcripture; and one muſt own, that whoever puts himſelf in the diſpoſition to ſubmit and reſign himſelf to his Redeemer JESUS CHRIST, going to him with a ſincere heart, and deſirous to diſclaim himſelf

himſelf and all things, in order to reſtore them to his lawful Lord and King, is in the true way that leads to the end and deſign of religion, and conſequently poſſeſſes the true religion that guides us to ſalvation.

This, every ſoul who turns its deſire to the grace offered, and is converted to GOD, experiences in herſelf. If ſhe attends to the voice of conſcience that will check her, it will prove a corrector to admoniſh her to abſtain from groſs ſins, from avarice, from pride, from ambition, from ſenſuality, from luxury, *&c.* and incite her to the practice of the virtues of charity, of humility, of renouncing the pleaſures of ſenſe, of chaſtity, of the love of GOD, and of our neighbour, and of the hatred of ſelf: ſhe will be attracted inwardly, if ſhe is faithful to this firſt renunciation, to forſake herſelf and all her own reaſonings, as well with regard to ſpirituals as temporals: the law of the love of GOD will by degrees be engraved in her heart, and teach her theſe things: it will lead her to the pure love which baniſhes all ſelfiſhneſs, that we may have no more views, no more purpoſe, no more intereſt in any thing, but in GOD, in his glory, and the accompliſhment of his will: and this love

will

will become ſo vehement in her heart, that it will at laſt change her entirely; ſo that ſhe will be able to ſay truly with the apoſtle, *I live no more, but Chriſt liveth in me*, Gal. ii. 20.

Here then you have in miniature the true chriſtian religion, the true belief, and the true ſaving and juſtifying faith. I do not think there is any man whatſoever, though he have but ſome faint light, and ſome ſmall experience of what the voice of conſcience is, and has but a little attended to what paſſes in the interior of his heart, who is not convinced of the truth of what I have here ſaid, namely, that in this conſiſts the end and eſſence of religion, and the nature of faith in JESUS CHRIST; not of an imaginary and hiſtorical faith, but of a juſtifying and ſaving faith, which makes us partakers of JESUS CHRIST, and transforms us into him: this then is the foundation, the eſſence, and end of religion.

How comes it to paſs then, that men amuſe themſelves with a thouſand and a thouſand things that are only meer acceſſories to religion? about a thouſand diverſities of outward ceremonies, with which they have dreſſed it up? about ſo many different

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ſentiments concerning certain points, opinions and doctrines which they have eſpouſed, according to the different idea which men have formed themſelves about them, and concerning which they have drawn up confeſſions of faith, taken from and ſupported by paſſages of the holy ſcripture, which they have found to favour their opinions; which afterwards they will needs advance and maintain as the foundation of religion, and the cement of their union; and this has been the occaſion of ſchiſm, hatred, perſecution, and all ſorts of diviſion among men, ever ſince the beginning of chriſtianity.

But it is not ſurprizing that matters ſhould go thus among the generality of men, who in reality know no other religion but their temporal intereſt, their pleaſures, voluptuouſneſs and ſenſuality; who place all their ſatisfaction in the enjoyment of earthly things, and the gratification of their irregular paſſions; who imagine that they diſcharge the duty they owe to GOD, by ſome external ſhew and air of devotion. As to theſe, I ſay, it is not ſurpriſing, that having no mind to deny themſelves and their carnal pleaſures, they ſeek to perſuade themſelves

ſelves they are good Chriſtians, when they zealouſly maintain their opinions in the acceſſory things of the chriſtian religion, which they have embraced either by their own choice, or becauſe they inherit them from their parents.

But it is ſurpriſing that ſouls whom GOD hath drawn to himſelf, by the grace which he has vouchſafed them, to renounce the filth and pollution of ſin, and who have a ſincere deſire to live unto GOD; that ſuch ſouls (ſeduced by their own elementary ſpirit, curious to penetrate into profound myſteries, or by the credit which men of eloquence have acquired with them, and the aſcendant they have got over their minds) ſhould ſuffer themſelves to be perſuaded that ſuch acceſſory opinions are the foundation on which religion ought to reſt, and the cement of union that ought to be among the children of GOD. This, I own, is what aſtoniſhes me; and I pray to GOD with all my heart that he may enlighten their underſtanding, and lead them in the way of lowlineſs, and of truly renouncing their own ſpirit, that they may ſhare in the promiſe our Lord JESUS CHRIST makes to thoſe *that are poor in ſpirit*, Matt. v. 3.

Herein

Herein it is, that the union of the members of JESUS CHRIST conſiſts: all who ſuffer themſelves to be poſſeſſed by his Spirit, who have given admittance to that Spirit in their heart, by a ſincere deſire, and a will determined to bid farewel to all things, and to themſelves; theſe are united one with another by the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST, which is in them: and according as that holy Spirit takes poſſeſſion of the whole ſoul, in driving out the old man, till ſuch time as he is entirely baniſhed, or rather that he is entirely dead; according as that work is advanced and perfected, ſo far are theſe ſouls united with JESUS CHRIST, and likewiſe among themſelves, being partakers of one and the ſame ſpirit that moves and governs them. It is for this reaſon that the apoſtle ſays, *All thoſe that are led and moved by the Spirit of God, are the children of God*, Rom. viii. 14. How then is it poſſible there ſhould be any diviſion among them? This is as impoſſible as it is that a body animated only by one ſpirit, ſhould be divided and at variance with the members that compoſe it, and that theſe members ſhould be divided among themſelves.

If

If then we would ſee union flouriſh among the children of GOD, if we deſire that all diviſion and miſunderſtanding ſhould ceaſe, let us all take up a firm reſolution of renouncing ourſelves, and all things, all our ſelfiſh tempers, and moſt refined paſſions, and the roots of thoſe vices that are ſo deeply implanted in our natures. Let us ſurrender ourſelves to JESUS CHRIST anew, without reſerve, that he may diſpoſe of us according to his pleaſure, and prepare us by the operation of his holy Spirit, to become his permanent habitation, that he may reign in us as ſovereign Lord: let us for this purpoſe follow all the motions of our conſcience, and the inward attraction of GOD's Spirit, which inceſſantly invites every ſoul, according to the ſtate or degree of converſion ſhe is in, to ſelf-denial. Let us not embarras or encumber ourſelves with any other thing, but to be attentive to the voice and attraction of the well-beloved of our ſoul, that invites us ſo lovingly to follow him. Let us caſt off all care and concern for every other thing, as not belonging to us, and we ſhall ſoon perceive the reign of our Saviour JESUS CHRIST to flouriſh and ſettle in us, and in all thoſe who ſhall without hypocriſy follow

this

this rule: we ſhall ſee union gradually cemented and confirmed among us, according as the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST ſhall take entire poſſeſſion of us, and that all miſunderſtanding, diſpute, ſcandal and diviſion ſhall ceaſe without our thinking of the matter.

In the ſame manner, as it happens to every one of us, that the more the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST takes the poſſeſſion and government in us, and ſubjects to itſelf all the powers of our ſoul, the more alſo war and diſſenſion ceaſe within us. And when our whole being, the whole man is intirely ſubjected to him, there is nothing any more in us but a ſweet and agreeable peace, an intire harmony of the whole man, which is ſubject to the yoke of the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST, who governs him with gentleneſs and benignity, and whom the man obeys in all his powers without any violence or reſiſtance. He is in peace and perfect union with GOD, and in admirable harmony with himſelf: and all the parts and members that compoſe him, do mutually aſſiſt, love and ſerve one another, according to the employment aſſigned to each by the Spirit that governs him. And all this is done ſolely by the ſubmiſſion and inward attention into which man

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is entered, by ſurrendering himſelf to his Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who by his holy Spirit has wrought this great work in him.

Thus ſhall it come to paſs, if it pleaſe GOD, in a little time, that peace and union ſhall ſucceed to trouble and diſſenſion, among thoſe that ſeek after GOD ſincerely. As ſoon as they ſhall abandon all the fruitleſs labour in which the greater part have been employed, in order to mind the one thing neceſſary, namely, to enter into the true denial of themſelves, to which the ſpirit of grace that is in them, inceſſantly invites them, if they attend to it: that eternal Spirit which reſides in the ground of their heart, will invite them to die to the deſire of knowing and poſſeſſing, in order to inflame their hearts more and more with the pure fire of the divine love, to which thoſe deſires are ſo contrary, that they keep and fix us in ourſelves, and in our own ſpirit, and hinder our union with GOD, and with one another, detain us in multiplicity, prevent unity, and our ever arriving at true peace of mind, either with ourſelves or others: for moſt certainly there is no union to be expected among us, ſo long as we are amuſed or attached to any thing whatever

but

but GOD, and the inward attention which he requires of us to follow him, and to let him operate in us, in order to deſtroy utterly our own wiſdom, without this, no union with GOD, or among ourſelves.

For I beſeech you to tell me, is there any reaſon why a ſoul in the diſpoſition of renouncing herſelf, that I have deſcribed, ſhould not arrive at the divine union, without having or buſying herſelf about any other thing, than inwardly attending to what paſſes in the heart; walking and behaving thus in all things in the preſence of GOD, after a child-like manner, renouncing herſelf, and following the way which the Spirit of grace ſhews her internally? ſhe will undoubtedly arrive thereat, ſhould ſhe know nothing elſe but the obedience which ſhe faithfully practices: this would be the means of leading her to GOD, were ſhe otherwiſe without information, or had no diſtinct light about the myſteries, or articles of belief, with which our creeds are filled; if ſhe ſimply believed without diſtinction all that is recorded about other religious matters, ſeeking after no other knowledge but to poſſeſs GOD in forſaking and renouncing herſelf;

GOD

GOD would afterwards teach her ſuch things as ſhould be for her happineſs to know.

I am of opinion, that in theſe laſt times GOD will lead ſouls to this truth, reclaiming them from ſuch a multiplicity of practices, of learned gloſſes and comments, in order to attach them ſolely to the poſſeſſion of GOD; and then laying aſide all the reſt, an union will come [founded] in GOD himſelf: we ſhall underſtand one another, love one another, and be united together by the Spirit, which will animate us all, even the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST. GOD grant us this grace, *Amen*, JESUS! for the glory of thy name, come quickly and take poſſeſſion of thy kingdom.

The thing then which hinders the reign of JESUS CHRIST in us, is the want of renouncing our own ſpirit, which we idolize to ſuch a degree, that we eaſily and joyfully renounce all the reſt without pain: but all this partial renunciation, though good in itſelf, ſerves only to nouriſh and entertain our own ſpirit, if the renouncing of that alſo does not follow; eſpecially ſince it cleaves to nothing more violently than to ſuch things as it believes to be ſpiritual; and theſe are the moſt difficult to be renounced. Hence

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it comes that from a deficiency in this total renunciation of our own ſpirit to GOD, all the other renunciations that make a glaring ſhow outwardly, and which the ſouls that ſeek after GOD embrace in the beginning with great warmth, are nevertheleſs but of little moment in compariſon of this other that coſts them ſo dear: for they are ſo ſtrongly attached to their ideas, to what they fancy they know by their underſtanding, and which they believe to be true (eſpecially when the ſentiments they have embraced are different from the common opinion) that they bring perſecution upon themſelves, and hazard life and fortune in ſupporting them; which they do with zeal and animoſity againſt all thoſe that are of a contrary ſentiment; though theſe be more enlightened, more advanced in the way of piety, and have more experience than themſelves.

As theſe conceited opinions are very different, and often contrary, even among people of probity, and each of them is ſtrongly biaſed to his pretended lights and ſentiments in the acceſſory things of religion, and in a great number of opinions; and each will defend his ſentiment, as believing he ſhould

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do an injury to GOD, and act againſt his conſcience, if he yielded, and did not ſupport his opinions with all his power and might, and endeavour to make them be received by others; and theſe refuſing to adjuſt the difference, how is it poſſible that this ſhould not create diviſion, averſion, different parties, and all ſorts of miſchief?

But you will ſay, How ſhall one remedy this evil, which is ſo manifeſt? I know no other remedy for me, but to ſubmit my ſpirit to JESUS CHRIST, to look upon the doctrine of ſelf-denial taught by him, as the one thing neceſſary to be believed and practiſed; to adhere to GOD alone in giving my heart to him. As to the reſt, ſince almoſt all the tenets of religion are diſputed among men, even among the men of piety, and every body explains them and ſupports his ſentiments by paſſages of holy writ; the letter of which they make the apple of diſcord among them; I conclude that the things that make the ſubject of their diſpute are only acceſſories, ſince the diverſity of their opinions does not altogether hinder the Spirit of grace from operating in their hearts; for I ſee, that notwithſtanding this diverſity of ſentiments, there are in all the

parties ſome truly pious, and who ſeek GOD with all their heart: but nevertheleſs, as I cannot afford time for ſpeculation, nor to examine which of theſe have the ſound doctrine, and the moſt conformable to truth in the things they make the ſubject of their diſpute; having neither ſufficient light, nor capacity, to unravel all that they propoſe to me pro and con; this enquiry would leave me nothing but doubt and uncertainty in my underſtanding, and the laſt ſentiment that I read or heard might appear to me to be the true one, for they will all make uſe of the holy ſcripture to prove their opinions or belief, and I firmly believe all that is contained in that ſacred book. I ſhould therefore be like a weather-cock, *turning about with every wind of doctrine, by the ſlight of men*, Eph. iv. 14.

To avoid this, I leave all theſe inquiries, I caſt myſelf into the arms of GOD, and ſay, My GOD! through thy grace I believe all that it hath pleaſed thee to reveal in holy writ, I embrace and receive it; but as I am incapable of comprehending its meaning farther than that one thing only is neceſſary; that is, that I renounce myſelf, and all my corrupt paſſions; that I go to my

Saviour

Saviour JESUS CHRIST, who invites me, and is willing to deliver me from my corruption, and to make me to become a new creature in him; and it is by him I come unto thee, and beſeech thee to take my heart, which thou draweſt after thee, and to grant me increaſe of grace to obey thee in following my Saviour, and giving myſelf wholly to him without reſerve. As for every other thing that I read in ſacred writ, I believe that all is truth, as thou haſt revealed it by my Saviour JESUS CHRIST, his Apoſtles and thy Prophets: I believe it, and am willing to underſtand it, according to the ſenſe thou haſt given it by thy holy Spirit that has dictated it; but I have not the boldneſs to deſire to comprehend the meaning of it by my weak and darkened underſtanding; neither dare I pray thee to enlighten me as to all theſe things, ſince thy Apoſtle ſaid, that *knowledge puffeth up*, and that he deſired *to know nothing but* JESUS CHRIST *crucified*. It is to this knowledge that I chooſe to confine myſelf, as he did; and to deſire nothing but the entire crucifixion of my old man, which is what my Saviour is willing to operate in me, and by that operation of his Spirit, I ſhall by my

my own experience learn that ſcience which thy holy Apoſtle deſired to know, namely, JESUS CHRIST crucified. To this I am willing to limit my deſire of knowledge; it is what gives peace to my ſoul, and ſets my heart in tranquillity and repoſe; draws me out of multiplicity, and places me in unity. O happy ignorance of all the reſt! It ſuffices me, my GOD! that thou knoweſt all: uniting myſelf to thee, to thy will, I know all in thee that is neceſſary to be known; though I know nothing in myſelf, in my capacity, and in a diſtinct manner; nor do I deſire to know any thing but that which thou ſhalt be pleaſed by thy holy Spirit to teach me.

Thus GOD is my All, and this ſuffices me; he is the Truth; I embrace him entire as he is in himſelf: or rather, I loſe myſelf in him, who infinitely ſurpaſſes all my comprehenſion.

I know no other truth but GOD himſelf. *All men are liars*, Pſal. cxvi. 11. And every light or information that can be comprehended by the human underſtanding, is only a faint ray, a ſmall, a very ſmall part of what the divine Spirit of GOD enlightens us with, and falls infinitely ſhort of the

truth. In this claſs of divine truths, I mean, for example, thoſe that regard GOD himſelf, his eſſence, the holy Trinity, our adorable Saviour JESUS CHRIST, his humanity, his merits, what he has done for us, his eternal generation, and other myſteries of the Chriſtian religion; of which no man can have any knowledge but in part, and but in a ſmall part, ſince theſe things do infinitely ſurpaſs the capacity of man. Let us adore GOD, and acknowledge we cannot attain unto theſe myſteries. Let us do homage to the immenſe grandeur of our GOD! Let us put ourſelves in a diſpoſition to receive the efficacy of that love he hath for us, which ſurpaſſes all knowledge! Let us worſhip him, and plunge ourſelves into that ocean of love and grace which he has freely beſtowed upon us in CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD.

It is to GOD alone then I adhere, and to nothing leſs than him: if thereafter it ſhall pleaſe GOD to cauſe to iſſue forth from the ſacred darkneſs of faith, which is the place of my ſoul's abode, ſome beams that may ſtrike me, and ſhow my underſtanding ſomething diſtinct about any of his myſteries, of which he has made ſome faint diſ-

coveries

coveries in ſacred writ; I receive that light with humility; I take down in writing what it diſcovers to me; and which at the ſame time, from the ground of my heart whence it flows, it imprints in my underſtanding with certainty and evidence. This I write down for the edification of my brethren. If they meet with any thing therein that may be uſeful or profitable to them, I rejoice at it. But GOD forbid that I ſhould make parade of theſe lights which it pleaſes GOD to vouchſafe me freely. I will neither boaſt of them, nor endeavour to perſuade any perſon to accept them, nor trouble myſelf to anathematize thoſe that will not receive them, nor make a party with thoſe that ſhall: far leſs pretend that theſe notices ought to be made the baſis and foundation of the children of GOD. Be all ſuch ſentiments far from me: whoever has them, is poſſeſſed rather of the ſpirit of error than the ſpirit of truth, though he had the greateſt lights, and knew the moſt ſublime myſteries.

And in thus doing homage to our GOD, in acknowledging with the Apoſtle *Paul*, that *we know but in part*, 1 Cor. xiii. 9. We will not ſtand trifling and diſputing about our

little diſcoveries, condemning thoſe that will not receive them. We ſhall be far from making them the foundation of religion; but will ourſelves get beyond them inceſſantly, in order to cleave to GOD alone: We ſhall ſeek to be united to him by an entire renunciation of ourſelves: it will be by this renunciation that the life of JESUS CHRIST will become ſettled in our hearts, which is the Spirit of divine love: it will be this Spirit that will unite all of us together, in whom it ſhall dwell and reign, by the intire deſtruction of all propriety, arrogating, and aſſuming: All theſe ſhall be ſtrictly united, and being quickened and governed by one and the ſame Spirit, they ſhall want no other law to maintain their union, but what is preſcribed by the love that dwells in them; which will be as natural to them, as the harmony, the mutual aid and union which is found among all the parts and members of the human body, and of the whole man. Without this, there is no union to be ſought or expected; it is in vain: GOD will level every other foundation, for himſelf will be the only foundation on which his church ſhall be built.

Shall

Shall we make union to conſiſt in outward forms, in aſſembling and praying together, hearing, and preaching, according to the manner that each religious ſociety has found moſt convenient, for mutual edification and inſtruction? It is very plain that it is not in theſe things that union conſiſts; ſince in all the different parties there are found ſome ſouls that love GOD ſincerely, and likewiſe ſome that are hypocrites. Thoſe that would needs reform, ſeparate themſelves, and form outward ſocieties compoſed only of children of GOD, have never to this day been able to maintain their aim. This ſufficiently ſhews, that it is in vain we labour to obtain an union of this kind. This, on the contrary, is what has produced the different ſects and parties among thoſe that bear the name of Chriſtians.

Beſides, in the beſt of theſe aſſemblies, where there are moſt perſons that ſeek GOD ſincerely, and the preachers are likewiſe of the ſame way of thinking, the very nature of the outward exerciſes that are practiſed, cannot permit a perfect union; for that which ought to make our union one with another, can be no other thing than that

which makes our union with GOD. And it is not by any thing that the external or internal ſenſes can operate or comprehend, that we arrive at this union; but only by that Spirit by which GOD conducts the ſouls that die to all the operations, not only of the outward and inward ſenſes, but likewiſe give up to him thoſe of the moſt noble powers of the ſoul, and will, by ſubmitting itſelf by ſuffering, or being paſſive. This death is abſolutely neceſſary, that we may arrive again to the divine union, and is the moſt painful and ſharpeſt death that we have to paſs through, in order to arrive at that ſtate. Whereas all that is practiſed outwardly in theſe aſſemblies, is operated only by the faculties of the ſenſes and external powers, and ſerves to keep them up, to nouriſh, and put them in a readineſs for the good things that are preſented to them, in order to awaken and give them an appetite for obtaining new life, if they are in a languiſhing ſtate, and at the laſt extremities.

All this may be very good for ſuch perſons as ſtill are and live in theſe things, in order to excite them to forſake the evil, and practiſe the good, and to abſtain from thoſe hurtful

hurtful and unprofitable things, to which they before applied their faculties: For theſe perſons are ſtill in their outward ſenſes; and therefore words that may ſtrike the outward ſenſes, and incite them to ſeek after GOD, may be neceſſary to inform, and ſhew them where to find him. And indeed, thoſe who are called to teach the ignorant, and exhort men to amend their lives, are obliged to do it with fidelity: but they muſt not pretend that thoſe outward exerciſes are what ought to conſtitute the union of the members of CHRIST.

GOD *is Spirit: his worſhippers worſhip him in Spirit*, John iv.24. This Spirit is entirely ſeparate and diſtinct from the ſenſes of the natural man, and their operations; and is not communicated by their aſſiſtance, but by the inward man, the new creature, which I have called the *divine* man, and which alone is capable of being united to GOD, by the reſemblance it bears to the ſupreme being, of which it is an emanation or efflux. It is nothing then but the neceſſity ariſing from the depravity of our mind, that makes GOD ſeek after us by the mediation and help of the ſenſes. It is not his voice that makes itſelf to be heard by

them, but the voices of his miniſters, or of men; and their admonitions only ſerve to invite us to enter again into our hearts, to ſeek our GOD there, as being the place where he communicates himſelf to us anew, in the new birth, the moment we are capable of it.

Thoſe that are the miniſters of GOD in this office, will be extreamly delighted, if their hearers quickly learn to underſtand the voice of the true Shepherd, JESUS CHRIST, in their interior: And ſince, as ſoon as that comes to paſs, the Shepherd will invite them to ſilence, and to ceaſe from depending upon the operations of their ſenſes, in order to keep themſelves at his feet, and liſten peaceably; being attracted thereto in their inmoſt ground, they will forſake every thing that diverts them from hearkening yet more attentively to the voice of the true Teacher, JESUS CHRIST. Thoſe true miniſters will not be jealous at this, they will rejoice at it, and be ſo much the more united to them in him, who alone ought to make the cement of their union.

Being arrived at this grace, we ſhall know, aſſiſt, and converſe with each other by the ſame Spirit, and in the ſame Spirit, in the

ſame manner that GOD communicates himſelf to us. Diſtance of places, and bodily abſence, will not hinder our communication. And thus knowing by our own experience, and participating of that union in Spirit with GOD, and among ourſelves, in reality and truth, we ſhall be far from laying the foundation of it in the operations of the ſenſes, from which we find ourſelves ſeparated more and more. It is for this reaſon that our Lord JESUS CHRIST ſays to his Apoſtles, *If I go not away, the Comforter will not come*, John xvi. 7. If I do not deprive you of my bodily preſence, ye ſhall not receive my Spirit.

JESUS CHRIST is near eſtabliſhing his ſpiritual reign upon earth, and to obtain the conqueſt of hearts by millions. They ſhall all bear witneſs that his kingdom is within us. What hath till now been treated by the generality of men as fanaticiſm, enthuſiaſm, and idle fancies, (excepting ſome few ſouls that have known the internal ways of the LORD) ſhall be acknowledged in a little time for the univerſal Spirit of the church, for the Spirit of JESUS CHRIST, which ought to animate and conduct his children: no longer dead children, with-

out his Spirit, and without the life of GOD, but living and operating by that Spirit, which ſhall ſoon renew the face of the earth, put an end to iniquity and ſin, and ſet innocence, virtue, righteouſneſs and holineſs on the throne.

Lord JESUS, come; thou haſt promiſed it: thou comeſt quickly; let us go and meet thee, in ſubmitting ourſelves to thy ſceptre by a ſpeedy repentance, abandoning iniquity, and doing homage to the truth. Come, Lord JESUS, come! and unite us all to thee, and make us members of thy church. Amen. *Hallelujah!*

TREATISES

By *JACOB BEHMEN.*

Boehme (Jacob)

Of the mixed World, and the wickedneſs thereof.

A DIALOGUE between an enlightened Soul and an unenlightened Soul; ſhewing the way from darkneſs to true illumination.

A Compendium of Repentance, or the key which opens to divine myſteries.

Of true RESIGNATION.

The way we muſt walk through this World into the kingdom of GOD.

He that will follow me, let him deny himſelf and take up his croſs, and follow me, Matt. xvi. 24. Mark viii. 34. Luke ix. 23. John xii. 26.

Peter ſaid to Chriſt, Behold we have forſaken all and followed thee, Matt. xix. 27. Mark x. 28. Luke xviii. 28.

L6

THE AUTHOR'S

PREFACE

TO THE

READER.

THE AUTHOR's
PREFACE,
TO THE
READER that loves GOD.

IF thou will uſe this book aright, and are in good earneſt, thou ſhall certainly find the benefit thereof; but I deſire thou may be warned, if thou be not in good earneſt, not to meddle with the dear names of GOD, *in which, and by which, the moſt High is named, ſtirred and powerfully deſired, leſt they kindle the anger of* GOD *in thy ſoul: for we muſt not abuſe the holy names of* GOD. *This little book is only for thoſe that would fain repent, and are in a deſire to begin. Both ſorts will find what manner of words are therein, and whence they are born. Be you herewith commended to the eternal goodneſs and mercy of* GOD. *Amen.*

Every

PREFACE.

Every one that aſketh receiveth; every one that ſeeketh findeth; and to every one that knocketh it ſhall be opened.

The grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, *the love of* GOD, *and the communion of the* HOLY GHOST *be with us all. Amen.*

Praiſe, and glory, and wiſdom, and thankſgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto him that ſitteth upon the throne, our GOD, *and the Lamb for ever and ever. Amen.*

OF THE

MIXED WORLD,

AND THE

WICKEDNESS THEREOF;

What now it is, and how it rules.

Which is a glaſs wherein every one may behold himſelf, and find what kind of Spirit's child he is.

1. CHRIST ſaid, O *Jeruſalem, Jeruſalem, how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not?* Alſo, O *Jeruſalem, thou that killeſt the prophets, and ſtoneſt them that are ſent unto thee,* Matt. xxiii. 37. Alſo, *we have piped unto you, but ye have not danced,* Matt. xi. 17. Alſo, *what ſhall I do more to this ſtubborn and perverſe generation, that will not ſuffer my Spirit to reprove them any more?* Alſo, *their mouth is full of curſing and bitterneſs,*

neſs, the poiſon of aſps is under their lips, and their hearts are never at unity. O how fain would I eat of the beſt grapes! but I am as a vine-dreſſer that gleaneth: I am altogether a ſtranger to my mother's children: they that eat of my bread tread me under foot.

2. Thus did the Word, or wiſdom of GOD, then lament and complain of the wicked children of men: but what would ſhe do now in theſe times? ſhe is now in great ſorrow and lamentation, and has turned her face away from theſe wicked children, and will not endure them in the garment they are now clothed with any more: ſhe crieth, and there is none that hear her: ſhe is in great ſorrow, weeping and wailing over the wickedneſs of theſe evil and unruly children: yet every one runs after that whore, covetouſneſs; which is full of all vice, wickedneſs and abominations: this doth the ſhepherd, and alſo the ſheep. It is a time of the higheſt and greateſt calamity, which if it ſhould not be ſhortened, none could be ſaved.

3. It is a time of which all the prophets have propheſied, and thou ſuppoſes it to be a golden time: but conſider thyſelf, thou blind man, whither thou art gone: doſt thou

thou think that this wickedneſs and falſehood which thou practiſes, is the ordinance of GOD? wait but a while, and thou ſhall ſoon ſee that it is the time of the laſt ſeal, in which the anger of GOD pours forth its vials, ſo that the wonders of hell are come to light and known: let this be told you, we have known it in the heavenly ſubſtantiality in the angelical world.

4. For the mother has rejected the wicked children of this time, and will endure their abominations no more: ſhe is with child, and brings forth a ſon in her old age, who ſhall ſhorten the days of iniquity: Let this be told you, whoſoever perſevereth, or goes on in his iniquity, ſhall have great ſhame thereof.

5. Are not the children of both ſexes, that run up and down playing together, full of venom and deviliſh wickedneſs, and do not all vices and abominations appear in them? do they not mock and ſcorn, blaſpheme, curſe, ſwear, cheat, and lie, and ſo are fully fitted to ſerve the devil in all ſhameleſs vices? Laſcivious impudence is eloquence and fine language with them; they jeer the ſimple with all manner of ſcornful and ſcoffing jeſts; all thieving, filching

filching and ſtealing, is counted a great piece of art and ſkill with them: deceit, and ſly tricks are a credit to them: they mock honeſt people without any regard. One that fears GOD they hoot and wonder at as if he was an owl, and count him for a fool: and this the old ones, and their parents ſee, and take delight and pleaſure in it, that their children are ſo expert in inſolence and vanity: and when their children ſcoff and jeer at honeſt people, their hearts are tickled at it. What they dare not do themſelves they teach their children to do, that they may have their own hearts luſts filled. All this the devil teaches them, and ſo rides in their hearts, domineering over ſoul and body.

6. They that can cozen, ſlander, deſpiſe, and betray their neighbour, and overthrow his honour and good name, blemiſh his reputation, diminiſh or hinder his eſtate, take great delight therein. All impudent wanton laughter, or unſeemly words and geſtures, are counted wit, dexterity and art. He that can out-jeer or laugh another to ſcorn, is maſter of the game, and domineers in the company; all theſe are the feats and the devil, and ſo he leads the poor ſoul

ſoul in a ſtring, and man underſtands it not.

7. Youths, both male and female, learn the devil's trade, before they learn any other thing; deſpite, ſcorn, wicked diſdain, pride, and inſolence, is the firſt work they learn; and this their elders help them forward in, and count it civility, manners, gallantry and art.

8. If they grow to be a little older, then the deſire of beaſtial luſt, and laſciviouſneſs, is the next work they learn: to this each ſex tempts and allures the other. Youths yield their heart for the devil to dwell in, and in their firſt ſpringing growth, the devil makes his neſt in it, and thereby enſnares the one, by the abominations of the other; the male by the female, and the female by the male.

9. If a man ſends his ſon to the univerſity, to have him learn ſomewhat that is good, that he may be ſerviceable to GOD and the commonwealth: there he learns pride, bravery, and cunning crafty ſubtilty, and how he may deprive the ſimple of his goods, which he has gotten by his ſweat and labour, and cloke all their doings with that they call right: they may do it by law, but

that

that cloke is the devil's, and the falſe deceitful heart is his ſervant. If he can ſmatter a little of any ſtrange language, then no plain man is good enough for him, his pride and haughtineſs does ſo overflow; his periſhable carcaſs muſt be trimmed and decked with trappings and fooleries. They are a people that can compliment, and behave themſelves finely, and by that means often procure the anguiſh that ariſes in the heart and conſcience of many a mother's daughter.

10. Theſe are they that are intruſted with churches, univerſities, and other ſeminaries of learning: are ordained, and then accounted to be the ſhepherds of CHRIST: yet they lodge the devil in their hearts. Such are alſo preferred to civil government, and places of authority in the commonwealth, and then they rule juſt as he that harbours in their hearts would have them. Thus the ſuperiors commit the greateſt wickedneſs, and the inferiors learn of them: the ſuperior deviſes how to get the goods and eſtate of the inferior to himſelf with ſubtilty, under pretence and colour of law: he lays taxes and impoſitions, and ſays they are for the good of the commonwealth: he

conſtrains

conſtrains the poor and ſilly to take hard pains, and to be his ſlave, to gratify his own pride; he threatens the ſimple with harſh and rugged words, he takes his ſweat and labour from him, and afflicts his body: he brings all he can to be in bondage under him, and yet himſelf has nothing of his own, but one only ſoul! and is but a ſtranger and a ſojourner in this world: nevertheleſs the needy muſt conſume his ſweat for him and his pleaſure; there is no pity, eaſe nor reſt to be had from him; and his dog has a better life than the needy ſoul under his roof. Yet all this he accounts equal, juſt and right: though it be not grounded upon nature, but in the dark abyſs or bottomleſs pit, where one form or property of darkneſs afflicts, vexes, torments, and tortures the other, and where the life is an enemy to itſelf.

11. Such things the inferior learns of his ſuperior, and alſo maintains himſelf by craft, knavery and cozenage. He thinks that if he did not ſo, he could not fill his belly in righteouſneſs; and then his reaſon complies and tells him he is forced to do ſo, without love and righteouſneſs, only to fill his belly. He learns riotouſneſs, luxury, and junket-

ings

ings of his ſuperior, and a true beaſtial life: what the ſuperior does in ſtate and delicacy, the inferior does in a beaſtial ſwiniſh manner of life; thus wickedneſs is wrought by wickedneſs: and the devil continues prince on earth, both over body and ſoul.

12. Conſider, how will you be able to ſubſiſt when GOD ſhall judge the ſecrets of men in his zeal? for then the cauſe of every thing, that every wicked man has done, or has had to do withal, will appear, and curſe him: every thing will ſet its own cauſe before him, and he ſhall feel it in his conſcience. How will you, who are ſuperiors, be able to endure, when your inferiors ſhall cry, wo, wo to you, for giving them occaſion to be lewd and unrighteous: and ſay you have bereft them of their ſweat, and ſo forced them to yield themſelves to do unrighteouſly, and to embrace vanity? How will you be able to render an account of your office wherein you have been ſet and placed, that you ſhould hinder injury and unrighteouſneſs, and keep the wicked in awe by reproof, correction and puniſhment; but you have not regarded to prevent their wicked courſes; you have only regarded your own wicked covetouſneſs, how you might

might deprive them of their ſweat; you have not ſought the good of their ſoul, but their ſweat and labour, for in other things they might do what they pleaſed themſelves. You have gone before them in wicked examples, ſo that they have looked upon you, have liked your doings, and followed your courſes; curſing, blaſpheming, pride, and defying others, has been your courſe, and they have learned to do ſo too; but you have not regarded that, you have looked to get their money, and not after the good of their ſouls.

13. And when the ſevere judgment of GOD ſhall appear, and that all works ſhall be manifeſted in the fiery eſſences; when all things ſhall be tried in the fire. What do you think? ſhall not all ſuch works remain in the fire? and then the poor ſoul will cry out againſt its ungodly accurſed labour, words and works, in the body: and one will curſe another for giving him occaſion to do ſuch evil. The torment of falſehood will boil up in the ſoul, and gnaw him; for it will be great anguiſh to him, that he has fooled away ſo great a glory, for ſo frivolous and trifling vanity, and falſe delights ſake.

14. All

14. All malice, ſcorn, covetouſneſs, pride, and deceit, will boil up in the ſoul, and one torment will continually kindle and gnaw the other that cauſed it. For example, where pride, or covetouſneſs, have cauſed unrighteouſneſs, there the unrighteouſneſs will gnaw, tear, and curſe that which cauſed it; and then the ſoul will conſider, if it was not for this abomination, I might attain grace: and when it ſhall thoroughly weigh and conſider itſelf, it will find that one abomination always begot and brought forth another; and ſhall perceive that itſelf is nothing but a ſtinking, lothſome abomination in the preſence of GOD. Then will it caſt itſelf in its anguiſh and torments inwards, into its center, and curſe GOD for having created it to be a ſoul; and the deeper it deſires to throw itſelf, the deeper its fall is, and yet it muſt ſtill be in the place of its abominations. It cannot get out from thence: the helliſh matrix, or womb, holds it captive; and ſo it muſt feed itſelf with aking anguiſh, curſing, abominations, and bitterneſs, even with thoſe things which the heart has wrought here in this life, in which at laſt it deſpairs, and that is its everlaſting food.

15. All

15. All earthly food and pleaſure periſhes at the end of days, or time, and all return again into the ether, or receptacle: but the will in man, and the deſire in the will, remains for ever.

16. Therefore do you, old and young, parents and children, ſuperiors and inferiors, mark and obſerve: you have filled the mother of nature full of all manner of abominations, and with all manner of wickedneſs; the fierce wrath of GOD is at hand: the laſt judgment is at the door; GOD will purge the earth with fire, and give every one his due reward. The harveſt comes: and every thing will be gathered and carried into its proper barn; he that will take no counſel, let him go on, he ſhall ſoon feel what the opening of the ſeventh ſeal will bring with it, in its center, or at the end.

17. When man's reaſon looks upon things, it ſays, I do not ſee that things are now otherwiſe than they formerly were: and beſides the world has always had good and bad in it, as hiſtorians tell us, and men muſt do as they do, or elſe they would be very fools, and laughing-ſtocks to the whole world, and be forced to ſtarve.

18. If a man ſhould not give his children liberty to learn the faſhions and dealings of the world, they would be nothing but derided and deſpiſed. Alſo, if a man ſhould not be ſomewhat like in his carriage, and take upon him ſome ſtate and bravery, he thinks he ſhould not be regarded; and except he uſe ſome device to get by, it often happens that he cannot maintain that. He ſays, I am ſure to get nothing with truth, and love, and righteouſneſs, but ſhall die a beggar: I muſt therefore do as others do, and then I ſhall be able to live amongſt them. Why ſhould I be the only fool of all the world? If I do commit ſin, GOD is gracious and merciful; CHRIST has ſlain ſin and death upon the croſs, and taken away the power of the devil? I ſhall repent once well enough, and be ſaved.

19. This is the rule that the world goes by, this is the courſe both of ſuperior and inferior, of the ſhepherd and of the ſheep. Thus CHRIST's paſſion and ſuffering muſt be a cloke for their folly and knavery; every one would be accounted a Chriſtian, and wear the mantle of CHRIST, when the poor ſoul, at the ſame time, plays the whore with the devil; for if with the mouth they confeſs

conſeſs themſelves to be Chriſtians, and cover their wickedneſs with the purple mantle of CHRIST: then, ſay they, all is well, and we are brave Chriſtians, although it be only with their lips, under the mantle of CHRIST, and they lodge the whore of antichriſt in their hearts.

20. O you falſe ſhepherds of CHRIST, you that climb up into the ſheepfold by the door of robbers; why do you tickle or comfort the knave of wickedneſs, with the ſufferings and death of CHRIST? Do you think that CHRIST was ſuch a one? For none ſhall wear his mantle, but ſuch as are like him. Search the ground or center of nature, and ſhew the people the corruption in their hearts; ſhow them the ſnares of the devil, in which we lie intangled, that they may no more look and long after the wicked courſe of this world; but that they may learn to fight againſt fleſh and blood, and alſo againſt the devil, and an hypocritical life; that they may go forth from the pride of the devil, and enter into righteouſneſs, love, and humility.

21. The paſſion of CHRIST will benefit none, unleſs they turn from their evil, falſe, and wicked purpoſes, and repent; and enter

into the covenant of GOD: to ſuch a one the ſufferings of CHRIST are very powerful and profitable. The hypocrites ſeemingly carry themſelves ſo, that they may have the name of CHRIST put upon them; but they thereby abuſe the name of GOD, and muſt give a ſtrict account of that.

22. If you be the ſhepherds of CHRIST, why do you not as CHRIST did, who told every one the truth to his face: he did both bruiſe and heal, not for favour, or reſpect to the perſon of any, but according to the will of his Father: the ſhepherds of CHRIST ought to do ſo too.

23. O beloved reaſon! thou walkeſt very wiſely in the way of this world, as far as concerns the outward body: but what becomes of the poor ſoul? this outward body is not its home, it is not its eternal native country. What will it avail thee to take thy pleaſure here a little while, and ſuffer eternal loſs? Or what profit will it be, to ſuffer thy children to follow their own will in bravery, luxury, and inſolence, or what evil they pleaſe, for a little while in this world, and for thee to take delight in their deſpiſing the poor and needy, when after this life thou ſhalt loſe them for ever?

thou ſuppoſeſt thou loveſt them, and does them good, when thou haſt ſo brought them up that the world commends their cunning fetches, deceit and gallantry, and it likes thee well; but the devil takes that to himſelf, and thou art the murderer of thy own children, and their greateſt enemy: for children look upon their parents at every turn; and when they ſee their idle, and unhappy waggery, and roguiſh tricks do pleaſe them, then the children play their tricks the more, and grow hardened, bold, and brazen-faced in their villainy. Theſe will cry out at the laſt judgment-day againſt their parents, for not reſtraining and withholding them from vanity, by nurturing them in the fear of GOD, correcting their vices, and by bringing them up in virtue.

24. If thou loveſt thy life and thy children, then loſe thy life and thy children as to the iniquity of this world; that they neither walk nor be therein: and then thou ſhalt find them and thy life again in heaven. For CHRIST ſays, *Whoſoever loveth his life ſhall loſe it; but whoſoever loſeth his life, his goods, his credit, for my ſake, he ſhall find them again in the kingdom of heaven.* Alſo, *when the world deſpiſeth, perſecuteth, and*

hateth you for my ſake, then rejoice! your reward is great in the kingdom of heaven. Alſo, *what will it profit a man to enjoy temporal pleaſure, riches, and honour in this life, that endures but for a moment, and loſe his ſoul that endures to eternity?*

25. Loving children in CHRIST, let every one conſider in what ſoil he grows here in this world. We muſt not ſtay a fitter ſeaſon for the bettering of our life; but to day, to day, when the voice of GOD ſounds, let every one enter into himſelf, and ſearch and try himſelf; let none regard the broad way of the world, if he do, he will go into the abyſs to the devils: for the way to the kingdom of heaven is a very ſtrait and narrow way, whoſoever will walk therein, muſt not tarry until the devil quite ſtoppeth up the door to him; he muſt not regard the courſe of this world, he muſt only enter into himſelf, and ſeek or ſearch himſelf: the time may come that he ſhall think himſelf only is left alone; but GOD has always his ſeven thouſand with *Elias*, beſide himſelf, whom he knows not of.

26. For a ſincere earneſt Chriſtian does not altogether know himſelf; he ſees nothing

thing but his vices and faults, in which the devil fights againſt him, they are always in his ſight; but in this world he knows not his own holineſs; for CHRIST hides it under his croſs, ſo that the devil ſees it not: therefore be always ſober and watchful, and reſiſt the crafty and ſubtil devil, that ye may live for ever. *Amen.*

A

DIALOGUE

Between an enlightened Soul, and an unenlightened Soul.

Shewing the Way from Darkneſs to true Illumination.

THERE was a poor Soul wandered out of paradiſe, and came into the kingdom of this world, and there the Devil met with it, and aſked, Whither doſt thou go thou Soul that art half blind?

THE SOUL SAID,

I would go ſee and ſpeculate the creatures of the world which the Creator has made.

THE DEVIL SAID,

How wilt thou look upon them, when thou cannot know their eſſence and property? thou wilt look upon the outſide only,

as

as upon a graven image, and cannot know them thoroughly.

THE SOUL.

How may I come to know their essence and property?

THE DEVIL.

Thy eyes would be opened, to see them thoroughly, if thou did but eat of that from whence the creatures are come to be good and evil, and thou would be as GOD himself is, and know what the creature is.

THE SOUL.

I am now a noble and holy creature, but if I should do so, I should die, as the Creator has said.

THE DEVIL.

No, thou should not die at all, but thy eyes would be opened, and thou would be as GOD himself, and receive or possess good and evil. Also thou shall be mighty powerful, and very great, as I am: all the subtilty that is in the creatures would be made known to thee.

THE SOUL.

If I had the knowledge of nature, and of the creatures, I would then rule the whole world in my own will.

THE DEVIL.

The whole ground of that knowledge lies in thee: do but turn thy will and desires from GOD and goodness, into nature and the creature, and then there will arise in thee a lust to taste, and so thou mayst eat of *the Tree of knowledge of good and evil*, and so come to the knowledge of all things.

THE SOUL.

Well then, I will eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, that I may rule all things by my own power, and be lord of myself on earth, and do what I will, as GOD himself does.

THE DEVIL.

I am the Prince of this world; and if thou wouldst rule on earth, thou must turn thy lust towards my image, desiring to be like me, that thou mayst get the cunning, wit, reason and subtilty that my image has. And thus the Devil did present to the Soul the power that is in the fire, or root of the creature, in the form of a serpent.

THE SOUL.

Behold, this is the power which can do all things, how may I do to have it?

THE

THE DEVIL.

Thou thyſelf art ſuch a fiery principle, if thou break thy will off from GOD, and bring thy deſire into this art, then thy hidden ground will be manifeſted in thee, and then thou may work in the ſame manner alſo: But thou muſt eat of that fruit, wherein each of the four elements in itſelf rules over the other, and are in ſtrife, the heat ſtriving againſt the cold, and the cold againſt the heat; and ſo all the properties of nature work feelingly: and then thou will be as the fiery wheel is, and ſo bring all things into thy own power, and poſſeſs them as thy own.

The Soul did ſo, and what happened upon it.

And when the Soul broke its will thus off from GOD, and brought its deſire into the fiery wheel; there preſently aroſe a luſt to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and the Soul did eat thereof.

As ſoon as it had done ſo All the properties of nature did awake in the Soul, and exerciſed their own luſt and deſire.

Firſt then aroſe the luſt of Pride, to be great, niighty and powerful, to bring all things under ſubjection at command, and

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ſo be its own lord, without control; to deſpiſe humility and equality; to eſteem itſelf only prudent, witty and cunning; and account all folly, that is not according to its way.

Secondly, aroſe the luſt of Covetouſneſs, a deſire of getting, which would draw all things to itſelf, into its poſſeſſion: for when the luſt of pride had turned away its will from GOD, then the life of the Soul would not truſt GOD any farther, but would take care for itſelf, and therefore brought its deſire into the creatures, namely, into the earth, metals, trees, and other creatures, and ſo the kindled fiery life became hungry and covetous, when it had broke itſelf off from the unity, love, and meekneſs of GOD, and attracted to itſelf the four elements and their eſſence, and brought itſelf into beaſtiality, and ſo the life became obſcure, dark, void, and wrathful, and the heavenly virtues and colours went out, like a candle extinguiſhed.

Thirdly, there awaked a ſtinging thorny luſt in the fiery life, namely, envy, a helliſh poiſon, and a property that all the devils have, and a torment that makes the life an enemy to GOD, and to all creatures: which

which envy rages furiouſly in the deſire of covetouſneſs, as the ſting of poiſon in the body. Envy cannot endure the good of any, but is miſchievous, and hates that which covetouſneſs cannot draw to itſelf: and thereby the noble love of the Soul was ſmothered.

Fourthly, there awakened in this fiery life a torment like fire, namely, Anger, which would murder and deſtroy all that which would not be ſubject to pride. Thus the ground and foundation of hell, which is called the anger of GOD, was wholly manifeſted in this Soul, and thereby it loſt the paradiſe of GOD, and the kingdom of heaven, and became ſuch a worm as the fiery ſerpent was, which the Devil preſented to the Soul in his own image and likeneſs. And ſo the Soul began to rule on earth in a beaſtial manner, and did all things according to the will of the Devil; living in meer pride, covetouſneſs, envy and anger, and having no true love towards GOD any more; but there did ariſe in the ſtead thereof, an evil beaſtial love of filthy lechery, wantonneſs and vanity; and there was no more pureneſs in the heart: for the Soul had left paradiſe, and taken the earth into

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its poſſeſſion; the mind thereof was wholly bent upon cunning, knowledge, ſubtilty, and getting a multitude of natural things: no righteouſneſs nor virtue remained in it at all: but whatſoever evil and wrong it committed, the Soul now covered it cunningly and ſubtilly under the cloak of its own power and authority, Law! and called it by the names of Right and Juſtice, and accounted it good.

The Devil came to the Soul.

Upon this the Devil drew near to the Soul, and brought it on from one vice to another, for he had taken it captive in his eſſence, and did ſet joy and pleaſure before it therein; and ſaid to the Soul, Behold now thou are powerful, mighty and noble: endeavour to be greater, richer, and more powerful ſtill: uſe thy knowledge, wit and ſubtilty, that every one may fear thee and ſtand in awe of thee, and that thou may be reſpected, and get a great name in the world.

The Soul did ſo.

The Soul did as the Devil counſelled it, and yet knew not that it was the Devil, but thought it was its own knowledge, wit and underſtanding, and that itſelf did very well and right all this while.

JESUS CHRIST met with the Soul.

The Soul going on in this courſe of life, our dear and loving Lord JESUS CHRIST, with the love and wrath of GOD, who was come into this world to deſtroy the works of the Devil, and to execute judgment upon all ungodly works; at a time he met with the Soul, and ſpake by a ſtrong power; namely, by his Paſſion and Death, into the Soul, and deſtroyed the works of the Devil in it, and diſcovered the way to the grace of GOD to the Soul, and did ſhine upon it with his mercy, calling it back to return and repent, and that then he would deliver it from that monſtrous deformed ſhape, vizard, or image, that it had gotten, and would bring it into paradiſe again.

How CHRIST wrought in the Soul.

Now when the ſpark of the love of GOD, or the divine light, was manifeſted in the Soul, it preſently ſaw itſelf, with its will and works, to be in hell, in the wrath of GOD; and found that it was a mis-ſhapen, ugly monſter in the preſence of GOD, and the kingdom of heaven; at which it was ſo affrighted, that the greateſt anguiſh awaked in it, for the judgment of GOD was manifeſted in it.

What

What CHRIST ſaid.

Upon this, the Lord CHRIST ſpoke into it with the voice of his grace, and ſaid, Repent, and forſake vanity, and thou ſhall attain my grace.

What the Soul did.

Then the Soul, in its ugly mis-ſhapen image, with the defiled coat of vanity, went before GOD, and intreated for grace, and the pardon of its ſins, and was ſtrongly perſuaded in itſelf, that the ſatisfaction and atonement of our Lord JESUS CHRIST did belong to it: but the evil properties of the ſerpent formed in the aſtral ſpirit, or reaſon of the outward man, would not ſuffer the will of the ſoul to come before GOD; but brought their luſts and inclinations thereinto. For thoſe evil properties would not die to their own luſts, nor leave nor forſake the world; for they were, and came out of the world, and therefore they feared the ſhame of the world, in caſe they ſhould forſake their worldly honour and glory.

But the poor Soul turned its countenance to GOD, and deſired grace from GOD, namely, that GOD would beſtow his love upon it.

The Devil came to it again.

But when the Devil ſaw that the Soul thus prayed to GOD, and would enter into repentance, he drew near the Soul, and thruſt the inclinations of the earthly properties into its prayers, and diſturbed the good thoughts and deſires which preſſed forward towards GOD, and drew them back again to earthly things, that they might have no acceſs to GOD.

The Soul ſighed.

The will of the Soul ſighed after GOD, but the thoughts ariſing in the mind, that ſhould penetrate into GOD, were deſtroyed, ſcattered and diſtracted, ſo that they could not reach the power of GOD; the poor Soul was more affrighted at this, that it could not bring its deſires into GOD, and began to pray more earneſtly: but the Devil, with his deſire, took hold of the kindled fiery wheel of life; and awakened the evil properties ſo, that evil or falſe inclinations aroſe, and went into thoſe things wherein they had taken pleaſure and delight before.

The poor Soul would very fain go forward to GOD with its will, and therefore uſed all its endeavours: but all its thoughts

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fled away from GOD into earthly things, and would not go to GOD.

The ſoul ſighed and bewailed itſelf to GOD, but it was as if it had been quite and clean forſaken, and caſt out from the preſence of GOD; it could not get ſo much as one look of grace, but was in meer anguiſh; alſo in great fear and terror; and ſuppoſed every moment that the wrath and ſevere judgment of GOD would be manifeſted in it, and that the Devil would take hold of it, and have it, and ſo fell into ſuch great ſorrow and heavineſs, that it became weary of all the joy and pleaſure it took in temporal things, though it was never ſo much delighted with them before.

The earthly natural will deſired thoſe things ſtill: but the Soul would willingly leave them altogether, and deſired to die to all temporal luſt and joy, and longed only after its firſt native country, from whence it came originally; but it found itſelf to be far from thence; alſo in great diſtreſs and want; and knew not what to do: yet reſolved to enter into itſelf, and ſtill ſtir itſelf up to pray more earneſtly.

The

The Devil's oppoſition.

But the Devil oppoſed it, and withheld it, ſo that it could not bring itſelf into any greater fervency, or repentance.

The Devil awaked the earthly luſts in its heart, that the inclinations might ſtill keep their evil nature, or falſe natural right, and ſet them at odds againſt the will and deſire of the ſoul; for they would not die to their own will and light, but would ſtill maintain their temporal pleaſures, and ſo kept the poor ſoul captive in their evil deſires, that it could not ſtir, though it ſighed and longed ever ſo much for the grace of GOD: for whenſoever the Soul prayed or offered to preſs forward towards GOD, then the luſts of the fleſh ſwallowed up the rays, and the ejaculations that went forth from the Soul, and brought them away from GOD into earthly thoughts, that the Soul might not partake of divine ſtrength; and then the Soul thought itſelf forſaken of GOD, and knew not that GOD was ſo near it, and did thus draw it. Alſo the Devil drew ſtill nearer the Soul, and entered into the fiery wheel of its life, and mingled its deſires with the earthly luſts of the fleſh, and mocked the poor Soul, and ſaid to it in the earthly thoughts, Why doſt

thou

thou pray? doſt thou think that GOD knows thee, or regards thee? conſider but what thoughts thou haſt in thee, in his preſence; are they not altogether evil? thou haſt no faith or belief in GOD at all; how then ſhall he hear thee? he hears thee not, leave off, wherefore will thou thus needleſly torment and vex thyſelf? thou has time enough to repent at leiſure, will thou be mad? Do but look upon the world, I pray thee, a little, does it not live in jollity and mirth? yet it will be ſaved well enough for all that, has not CHRIST paid the ranſom, and ſatisfied for all men? thou need do no more but perſuade and comfort thyſelf that it is done for thee: and then thou ſhall be ſaved. Thou cannot poſſibly in this world come to have any feeling of GOD: therefore leave off and take care for thy body, and look after temporal glory: what does thou ſuppoſe will become of thee if thou turn to be ſo melancholy, and ſenſleſs? thou will be the ſcorn of every body, and they will laugh at thy folly, and ſo thou will ſpend thy days in nothing but ſorrow and heavineſs, which is neither pleaſing to GOD nor nature. Prithee look upon the beauty of the world: for GOD has created thee in the world to be

a lord

a lord over all creatures, and to rule them; gather ſtore of temporal goods beforehand, that thou may not ſtand in need of the world: and when old age comes, or that thou grow near thy end, then prepare thyſelf for repentance; GOD will ſave thee, and receive thee into the heavenly manſions: there is no need of ſuch ado, in vexing, bewailing, and ſtirring up thyſelf, as thou make.

The condition of the Soul.

In theſe and the like thoughts, the Soul was enſnared by the Devil, and brought into the luſts of the fleſh, and earthly deſires; and ſo, as it were, bound with fetters and chains, and did not know what to do. It looked a little back into the world, and the pleaſures thereof; but ſtill felt in itſelf a hunger after divine grace, and would rather enter into, and always be in repentance, that it might come into favour with GOD: for the hand of GOD had touched it, and bruiſed it; and therefore it could reſt no where; but always ſighed in itſelf after ſorrow for the ſins it had committed, and would fain be rid of them, but could not get true repentance, much leſs the knowledge of ſin; and yet had ſuch a true hunger and longing deſire after repentance, and ſorrow for ſin.

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The Soul being thus heavy and ſad, and finding no remedy, nor reſt, bethought itſelf where to find a place to perform true repentance in, and when it might be free from buſineſs, cares, and the hindrances of the world: alſo, by what means it might obtain the favour of GOD: and therefore purpoſed to betake itſelf to ſome private ſolitary place, and give over all worldly employment, and temporal things, and thought in being compaſſionate and bountiful to the poor, that GOD would have mercy upon it, and ſought all kind of ways to get reſt, and to get the love, favour, and grace of GOD again. But all would not do; for all its worldly buſineſs followed it in the luſts of the fleſh, and it was enſnared in the net of the Devil, now as well as before, and could not get reſt; and though for ſome little while it was cheered with earthy things, yet preſently it fell to be as ſad and heavy again; for it felt the awakened wrath of GOD in itſelf, and knew not how that came to paſs, nor what it ailed: for many times great fear and temptations fell upon it, which made it comfortleſs, ſick, and faint with very fear; ſo mightily did the firſt bruiſing it with the ray, or influence of the ſtirring

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of grace, work upon the Soul; and yet it knew not that CHRIST was in it, in the wrath and ſevere juſtice of GOD, and fought with Satan, that ſpirit of error, that was incorporated in ſoul and body; and underſtood not that the hunger and deſire to turn and repent, came from CHRIST himſelf, by which the ſoul was drawn in this manner: neither did it know what hindered that it could not yet attain to divine feeling; it knew not that itſelf was a monſter, and did bear the image of the ſerpent, in which the Devil had ſuch power and acceſs to the ſoul, and in which image he had confounded all its good deſires, thoughts and motions, and brought them away from GOD and goodneſs, concerning which CHRIST ſaid, *The Devil ſnatcheth the word out of their hearts, leſt they ſhould believe and be ſaved.*

An enlightened and regenerated Soul met the diſtreſſed Soul.

By the providence of GOD an enlightened and regenerated ſoul met this poor afflicted and diſtreſſed Soul.

The enlightened Soul ſaid.

What ails thee, thou diſtreſſed Soul, that thou art ſo reſtleſs and troubled?

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The diſtreſſed Soul anſwered.

The Creator has hid his countenance from me, ſo that I cannot come to his reſt, and therefore I am thus troubled and know not what I ſhall do to get his loving-kindneſs again; for great cliffs and rocks lie in my way to his grace, that I cannot come to him, though I long after him ever ſo much, yet I am kept back, that I cannot partake of his power, virtue, and ſtrength, though I ſigh, and long, and wait for him.

The enlightened Soul ſaid.

Thou beareſt the monſtrous ſhape of the Devil, namely, the ſerpent, and are clothed therewith, in which the Devil has an entrance into thee, being his own property, and therein he keeps thy will from penetrating into GOD; for if thy will might penetrate into GOD, it would be anointed with the higheſt power and ſtrength of GOD, in the reſurrection of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, and that unction would then break in pieces that monſter which is in thee, and thy firſt image of paradiſe would be manifeſted in thee again, and then the Devil muſt loſe his power in thee, and thou would become an angel again. And becauſe the Devil does envy thee this happineſs, he holds thee captive

tive in his deſire in the luſts of the fleſh, from which if thou be not delivered, thou will be ſeparated from GOD, and can never enter into our ſociety.

The diſtreſſed Soul terrified.

At this ſpeech the poor diſtreſſed Soul was ſo terrified and amazed that it could not ſpeak one word more, when it perceived it was in the ſhape and image of the ſerpent, which ſeparated the Soul from GOD: and that the Devil was ſo nigh it in that image, and did mingle evil thoughts in the will of the ſoul, and had ſo much power over it thereby, and that it was ſo near damnation, and ſtuck faſt in the abyſs or bottomleſs pit of hell, in the anger of GOD: that it would have deſpaired of the grace of GOD, but that the power, virtue, and ſtrength of the firſt ſtirring of the grace of GOD, that bruiſed the Soul, upheld it, that it deſpaired not; and ſo the Soul wreſtled in itſelf between hope and doubt; whatſoever hope built up, that doubt threw down again, and ſo was in ſuch continual diſquietneſs, that at laſt the world, and all the glory thereof was lothſome to it, neither would it enjoy the pleaſures of this world any more, and yet for all this could not come to reſt.

The enlightened Soul came again.

At a time the enlightened Soul came again to this Soul, and finding it in ſo great trouble, anguiſh, and grief of mind, ſaid to it: What does thou? will thou deſtroy thyſelf in thy anguiſh and ſorrow? why does thou torment thyſelf in thy own power and will, who are but a worm, ſeeing thy torment increaſes thereby more and more? if thou ſhould ſink thyſelf down to the bottom of the ſea, or could fly to the uttermoſt coaſts of the morning, or riſe thyſelf above the ſtars, yet thou would not be releaſed; for the more thou grieve, torment, and trouble thyſelf, the more painful thy nature will be, and yet thou cannot come to reſt: for thy power is quite loſt, and as a dry withered ſtick burnt to a coal, cannot grow green and ſpring afreſh by its own power, nor get ſap to flouriſh again with other trees, and plants: ſo thou alſo cannot reach the place of GOD by thy own power and ſtrength, and transform thyſelf into thy firſt angelical image again, which thou had; for, in reſpect to GOD, thou are withered and dry, like a withered dry plant that has loſt his ſap and ſtrength, and ſo are become a dry tormenting hunger: thy properties are like

heat

heat and cold, continually ſtriving one againſt the other, and can never agree.

The diſtreſſed Soul aſked.

What then ſhall I do to bud forth again, and recover my firſt life which I had, wherein I was at reſt before I became an image?

The enlightened Soul anſwered.

Thou ſhall not do any thing at all but forſake thy own will, namely, that which thou call I: or Self. Then all thy evil properties will grow weak and faint, and ready to die: then thou wilt ſink down again into that one thing from which thou originally ſprung: for now thou lieſt captive in the creatures, and if thy will forſake them, the creatures, with their evil inclinations, will die in thee, which for the preſent ſtay and hinder thee, that thou cannot come to GOD: but if thou do this, thy GOD will meet thee with his infinite love, which he has manifeſted in CHRIST JESUS in the human nature; and that will impart ſap, life, and vigour to thee; that thou may bud, ſpring, and flouriſh again, and rejoice in the living GOD: as a branch growing upon his true vine. So thou will recover the image of GOD, and be delivered from the image of the ſerpent, and then thou ſhall come to be

my brother, and have fellowſhip with the angels.

The poor Soul ſaid.

How can I forſake my will, that the creatures which lodge therein may die, ſeeing I muſt be in the world, and alſo have need of it ſo long as I live?

The enlightened Soul anſwered.

Now thou has temporal honour, and worldly good which thou poſſeſs as thy own, to do what thou will with them; alſo the pleaſures of the fleſh: and thou regards not what thou do therein, or how thou gets them. And though thou ſee the poor and needy, who wants thy help, and is thy brother, yet thou help him not, but lays heavy burdens upon him, by requiring more of him than his neceſſities will bear; and vexes him, in forcing him to take pains and labour for thee, and thou take pleaſure therein. Beſide thou art proud, and inſult over him, and are rough, crabbed, and ſtern to him; thou exalts thyſelf above him, and makes ſmall account of him in reſpect of thyſelf: and then that poor vexed brother of thine, comes and ſighs towards GOD, that he cannot take the benefit of his labour and pains, but is forced by thee to live in miſery:

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and ſo with his ſighs and groans, he raiſes up the wrath of GOD in thee, which makes thy flame, thy unquietneſs, and thy unſatisfied deſire, greater and greater. Theſe are the creatures thou art in love with, and has broke thyſelf off from GOD for their ſakes, and brought thy love into them, and ſet thy love upon them; and ſo they live in thy love, and thou nouriſhes and keeps them by thy continual receiving them into thy deſire: and by thy receiving them, they come into, and live in thy mind. In that thou brings the luſt of life into thoſe unclean, filthy, evil, beaſtial creatures, which have formed themſelves, and have gotten an image in thee; and that image is a beaſt, having four evil inclinations; firſt, pride; ſecondly, covetouſneſs; thirdly, envy; fourthly, anger; and in theſe four properties the foundation of hell conſiſts, which thou carries in thee, and about thee, and it is imprinted and engraven in thee, and thou are quite taken captive therewith. For theſe properties live in thy own life, and thereby thou art ſevered from GOD, neither can thou ever come to GOD, unleſs thou forſake theſe evil creatures, that they may die in thee.

But ſince thou deſires I ſhould tell thee how to forſake thy own perverſe creaturely will, that the creatures may die, and that yet thou may live with them in the world: I tell thee that there is but one way to do it, which is narrow and ſtrait, and it will be very troubleſome and irkſome to thee at the firſt beginning, to walk in it, but afterwards thou will walk in it cheerfully.

Thou muſt rightly conſider, that in the courſe of this worldly life, thou walks in the anger of GOD, and in the foundation of hell. That this is not thy native country; and that a Chriſtian ſhould, and muſt live in CHRIST, and in his walking truly follow him: and that he cannot be a Chriſtian unleſs the ſpirit and power of CHRIST ſo live in him, that he becomes wholly ſubject to it. Now being the kingdom of CHRIST is not of this world, but in heaven, therefore thou muſt always be in a continual aſcenſion toward heaven, if thou will follow CHRIST, though thy body muſt dwell among the creatures and uſe them.

The narrow way to this perpetual aſcenſion into heaven, and the imitation of CHRIST is this: thou muſt deſpair of all thy own power and ſtrength, for in and by thy own

power

power thou cannot reach the gates of GOD, and firmly purpoſe and reſolve, wholly to give thyſelf up to the mercy of GOD, and alſo reſolve to ſink down with thy whole mind and reaſon, into the paſſion and death of our Lord JESUS CHRIST; always deſiring to perſevere therein, and to die from all thy creatures therein. Thou muſt alſo reſolve to turn away thy mind, and deſires from receiving of evil into them, and not ſuffer thyſelf to be held faſt by temporal honour, goods, or profit; and thou muſt reſolve to put away from thee all unrighteouſneſs, and whatſoever elſe may hinder thee; thy will muſt be wholly pure, and thou muſt be in ſuch a reſolution, that thou will never return to thy evil creatures any more, but that thou will that very inſtant leave them, and ſeparate thy mind from them, and that thou will immediately enter into the ſincere way of truth and righteouſneſs, and follow the doctrine of CHRIST. And as now thou does purpoſe to forſake the enemies of thy own nature, ſo thou muſt alſo forgive all thy outward enemies, and reſolve to meet them with thy love; that there may be no creature at all that might be able to take hold of thy will, and ſtay thee; but that thy will may

be ſincere, and purged from all creatures: and alſo, that if it ſhould be required thou muſt be willing and ready to forſake all temporal honour, and profit for CHRIST's ſake, and regard nothing that is earthly to love it, but to eſteem thyſelf in whatſoever ſtate, degree, and condition thou are, for temporal honour, or riches, and worldly goods, to be but a ſervant of GOD, and of thy fellow creatures; as a ſteward of GOD in thy office, which he has ſet thee in. The lofty looks and ſelf-love muſt be humbled, brought low, and ſo deſtroyed that no creature may ſtay in thy mind, to bring the thoughts or imagination to be ſet upon them.

Alſo thou muſt firmly imprint in thy mind that thou ſhall partake of the promiſed grace, in the merit of JESUS CHRIST, namely, of his out-flowing love which is in thee, which will deliver thee from thy creatures, and enlighten thy will, and kindle it with the flame of love, whereby thou ſhall have victory over the Devil: not as if thou could will, or do any thing but enter into the ſuffering and reſurrection of JESUS CHRIST, and take them to thyſelf, and with them aſſault and break in pieces the

kingdom

kingdom of the Devil in thee, and mortify thy creatures; and thou muſt reſolve to enter into this way this very hour, and never to depart from it, but willingly to ſubmit thyſelf to GOD, in all thy endeavours and doings, that he may do with thee what he pleaſes.

When thy will and purpoſe is thus prepared, it has broken through its own creatures, and is ſincere in the preſence of GOD, and clothed with the merits of JESUS CHRIST; and then it may freely go to the Father with the prodigal ſon, and fall down in his preſence, and pour forth its prayers, and put all its ſtrength forth in this divine work, and confeſs its ſins and diſobedience, and that it has turned away from GOD: this muſt be done, not with bare words, but with all its ſtrength, which is but a ſtrong purpoſe and reſolution to do it; for the ſoul itſelf has no ſtrength, nor power to effect it.

And when thou are thus ready, and that thy eternal Father ſhall ſee thy coming and returning to him, in ſuch repentance and humility; then he will inwardly ſpeak to thee, and ſay in thee, *Behold, this is my ſon which I had loſt, he was dead, and is alive again.* And he will come

to meet thee in thy mind, with the grace and love of JESUS CHRIST, and embrace thee with the beams of his love, and kiſs thee with his Spirit and ſtrength: and then ſhall thou receive ſtrength to pour out thy confeſſion before him, and to pray powerfully. This now is the right place where thou may wreſtle in the light of his countenance; and if thou ſtand reſolutely here, and ſhrink not back, thou ſhall ſee and feel great wonders: for thou ſhall find CHRIST in thee aſſaulting hell, and cruſhing thy beaſts in pieces, and that a great tumult and miſery will ariſe in thee.

Thy ſecret unknown ſins will alſo then awake, and labour to ſeparate thee from GOD, and keep thee back; and thou ſhall truly find and feel, how death and life fight againſt one another; thou ſhall alſo find what heaven and hell is. At all which be not moved, but ſtand reſolutely, and ſhrink not; and then at length all thy evil creatures will grow faint and weak, ready to die: and then thy will ſhall wax ſtronger, and be able to ſubdue and keep down thy evil inclinations, and ſo thy will and mind ſhall aſcend into heaven every day, and thy creatures die daily, and thou will get a mind

wholly

wholly new, and begin to be a new creature, and be changed into the image of GOD again, and be rid of the beaſtial monſtrous image and ſhape. And thus thou ſhall come to reſt again, and be delivered from thy anguiſh.

The poor Soul's practice.

When the poor Soul began to practiſe this courſe with ſuch earneſtneſs, it conceived it ſhould get the victory preſently, but the gates of heaven were ſhut againſt it in its own ſtrength and power, and it was as if it had been left and forſaken of GOD, and received not ſo much as one ray, look, or glimpſe of grace; and then it thought in itſelf and ſaid, ſurely thou haſt not ſincerely ſubmitted thyſelf to GOD; deſire nothing at all of GOD, but ſubmit thyſelf wholly to his judgment, ſentence, and condemnation, that he may kill thy evil inclinations; ſink down into him beyond the limits of nature and creature, and ſubmit thyſelf to him, that he may do with thee what he will: for thou are not worthy to ſpeak to him. Upon this the poor Soul took a reſolution to ſink down, and to forſake its own will; and when it had done ſo, there fell upon it the greateſt repentance for

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the ſins it had committed, and it bewailed bitterly its ugly ſhape, and was very ſorry that the evil creatures did dwell in it. And becauſe of its ſorrow, it could not ſpeak one word more in the preſence of GOD, but in its repentance did conſider the bitter paſſion and death of JESUS CHRIST, namely, what great anguiſh and torment he had ſuffered for its ſake, that he might deliver it out of its anguiſh, and change it into the image of GOD; and in that conſideration it wholly ſunk down, and did nothing but complain of its ignorance and negligence, and that it had not been thankful to its Redeemer, nor had once conſidered ſo great love, but had ſo idly ſpent its time, and not regarded to conſider how it might come to partake of that grace; but in the mean while had formed in itſelf the images and figures of earthly things, with the vain luſts and pleaſures of the world, from which it had gotten ſuch beaſtial inclinations, that now it muſt lie captive in great miſery, and for very ſhame dare not lift its eyes up to GOD, who hid the power and light of his countenance from it, and will not ſo much as look upon it. As the Soul was thus ſighing and crying, it was drawn into the abyſs or pit of horror,

horror, and as it were at the gates of hell, and ſhould periſh there. Upon which the Soul was as it were bereft of ſenſe, and wholly forſaken, and thereby did forget all its doings, as if it would yield itſelf to death, and ceaſe to be a creature any more; and ſo did yield itſelf to death; and deſired nothing elſe, but to die and periſh in the death of its Redeemer JESUS CHRIST, who had ſuffered ſuch torments and death for its ſake, and in this periſhing it began to ſigh and pray in itſelf very inwardly to the mercy of GOD, and to ſink down into the meereſt mercy of GOD. Upon this the amiable countenance of the love of GOD appeared unto it, and penetrated through it as a great light, by which it grew exceeding joyful, and began to pray aright, and to thank the Moſt High for his grace, and to rejoice exceedingly, that it was delivered from the death and anguiſh of hell; and there it taſted of the ſweetneſs of GOD, and of his promiſed truth. And in that very inſtant all evil ſpirits, which had afflicted it before, and kept it back from the grace, love, and inward preſence of GOD, were forced to depart from it: and the wedding of the Lamb

was

was kept and ſolemnized, with the eſpouſing or contracting of the wiſdom of GOD with the ſoul, and the ſealing of CHRIST's victory was impreſſed, or ſet upon its ſubſtance, or into its eſſence, and it was received to be a child and heir of GOD again.

When this was done, the Soul became very joyful, and began to work in this power, and to celebrate with praiſe the wonders of GOD, and thought henceforth to walk continually in this power, ſtrength and joy; but it was aſſaulted from without, or outwardly, by the ſhame or reproach of the world; and within by great temptation, ſo that it began to doubt whether its ground was from GOD or no; and whether it had really and truly partaken of the grace of GOD or not; for the accuſer, or Satan, went to it, and endeavoured to lead it out of this way, and to make it doubtful of its way, and ſaid to it inwardly;

The accuſer, or Satan, ſpoke to the Soul, ſaying,

It is not of GOD, it is but thy imagination.

The divine light alſo retired in the Soul, and ſhined but in the inward ground, as light in embers, or fire raked up in aſhes,

of

ſo that reaſon was folly to itſelf, and thought itſelf forſaken, and the Soul knew not what had happened to it, nor whether it was true that it had taſted the divine light of grace, or not; and yet it could not leave off ſtruggling, for the burning fire of love was ſown in it, by which there aroſe in it a great hunger and thirſt after the divine ſweetneſs, and now at length the Soul began to pray aright, and to humble itſelf in the preſence of GOD, and to examine and try its evil inclinations in its thoughts, and to put them away: by which the will of reaſon was broken, and the evil, inbred, innate, or native inclinations were killed, and deſtroyed more and more; and this was very woful to the nature of the body; for it made it faint, feeble, and weak, as if it been very ſick, and yet it was no natural ſickneſs that it had, but it was the melancholy of the earthly nature of the body, becauſe its evil luſts were deſtroyed.

And when the earthly reaſon found itſelf thus forſaken, and the poor Soul ſaw that it was derided outwardly, and deſpiſed by the world, becauſe it would now walk no more in the way of the wicked and ungodly; and that it was inwardly aſſaulted by

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the accuſer, Satan, who alſo mocked it, and continually ſet before it the beauty, riches, and glory of the world, and eſteemed the Soul fooliſh that embraced them not: it made the Soul think thus with itſelf; O eternal GOD! what ſhall I now do to come to reſt?

The enlightened Soul met it again, while it was in this conſideration, and ſaid;

What ails thee, my brother, that thou are ſo heavy and ſad?

The diſtreſſed Soul anſwered.

I have followed thy counſel, and thereby attained a ray, look, or glimpſe of the divine ſweetneſs, but it is gone from me again, and I am now forſaken, and outwardly have very great trials and afflictions in the world: for all my good friends forſake me, and ſcorn me, and alſo inwardly I am aſſaulted with anguiſh, and doubt, and I know not what to do.

The enlightened Soul ſaid.

Now I like thee very well; for now our beloved Lord JESUS CHRIST walks with thee, and in thee, in this thy pilgrimage on earth, as he did himſelf when he was in this world, being always reviled, ſlandered, and evil ſpoken of, and had nothing of his own; and

thou

thou now bears his mark or enſign: therefore do not wonder at it, nor think it ſtrange; for it muſt be ſo, that thou muſt be tried, refined, and purified. In this anguiſh and diſtreſs thou ſhall have often cauſe to pray, and hunger after deliverance; and in thy hunger and thirſt thou will attract grace to thee from within and from without. For thou muſt grow from above, and from beneath, to be the image of GOD again. And as a young plant is ſtirred by the wind, and muſt ſtand in heat and cold, drawing ſtrength and virtue to it from above and from beneath by that ſtirring, and muſt endure many a tempeſt, and undergo much danger, before it can come to be a tree, and bring forth fruit; for in that ſtirring, the virtue of the ſun comes to move in it, whereby the wild properties of that plant come to be penetrated and tinctured, or qualified with the virtue of the ſun, and grow thereby.

And now is the time wherein thou muſt behave thyſelf as a valiant ſoldier in the Spirit of CHRIST, and co-operate with it thyſelf: For now the eternal Father, by his fiery power, begets his Son in thee, who changes the fire of the Father into the flame of

of love; ſo that out of fire and light, there comes to be one eſſence, being, or ſubſtance, which is the true temple of GOD; and now thou ſhall bud forth out of the vine CHRIST, in the vineyard of JESUS CHRIST, and bring forth fruit in thy life, and teaching of others, and ſhow forth thy love in abundance, as a good tree: For paradiſe muſt thus ſpring up again in thee, through the wrath of GOD againſt ſin: and hell be changed into heaven in thee. Therefore be not troubled at the temptations of the Devil, for he ſtrives for the kingdom which he had in thee; and having loſt it once, he muſt be confounded, and depart from thee. Therefore it is that he covers thee outwardly with the ſhame and diſgrace of the world, that his own ſhame may not be known, and that thou may be hid to the world. For with thy new birth, or regeneration, thou are in the divine harmony in heaven: therefore be patient, and wait upon the LORD, and whatſoever ſhall befal thee, take it from the hands of the LORD, as intended by him for thy beſt good. And ſo the enlightened Soul departed.

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The diſtreſſed Soul's courſe.

This diſtreſſed Soul began its courſe now under the patient ſuffering of CHRIST, and entered into hope in divine confidence, and from day to day grew ſtronger and ſtronger, and its evil inclinations died more and more in it, ſo that it came to be ſet in a great dominion or kingdom of grace, and the gates of the divine revelation, and the kingdom of heaven, were opened and manifeſted in it, namely, in the Soul.

And thus the Soul, in faith, returned to its true reſt, and became a child of GOD again.

To which GOD in his mercy help us all. Amen.

A

COMPENDIUM

OF

REPENTANCE;

OR,

A ſhort Deſcription of the Key which opens to the divine Myſteries, and leads to the Knowledge of them.

WHoſoever will attain to divine viſion in himſelf, and ſpeak with GOD in CHRIST, let him follow this courſe, and he ſhall attain it.

1. Let him gather all his thoughts and reaſon together, and all his mind into this one imagination, and take a ſtrong purpoſe and reſolution in himſelf, to conſider what he is, being the ſcripture calls him the Image

Image of GOD, the Temple of the HOLY GHOST, who dwells in him; and a Member of CHRIST; and offers the fleſh and blood of CHRIST to him to be his meat and drink.

2. He muſt conſider himſelf in his life, whether he be capable of ſo great grace, and worthy of ſo high a title as that of a Chriſtian; and begin to examine his whole life, and think with himſelf what he has done, and how he has ſpent all his time; and examine whether he finds himſelf to be in CHRIST, whether he has a godly will, or holy deſires in him, or not: what he is inclined to, and whether he find at any time in himſelf a will or deſire heartily panting after GOD and goodneſs, and ſo would fain be ſaved.

3. And if he find in himſelf a will, tho' never ſo weak, deeply hidden, which would fain turn to the grace of GOD, if it could; let him know, that that will is the ingrafted, incorporated, and in-ſpoken word of GOD in paradiſe, (or the love of GOD ſhed abroad in all our hearts) after ſin was committed; and that the GOD JEHOVAH, namely, the Father, doth draw him, thereby, ſtill to CHRIST: for in Self (which is the corrupted,

ed, or fallen nature) we have no will at all to the obedience of GOD.

4. For that drawing of the Father, namely, the ingrafted, incorporated, in-ſpoken word, draws all, even the moſt ungodly, if he be not altogether a thiſtle, if he will but ſtand ſtill from his evil working for one moment.

5. So that none have cauſe to doubt of the grace of GOD, if at any time he once find in himſelf a deſire to turn, that inclination being the effect of grace then offered to him.

6. And let not that party defer his turning one moment, but as it is written, *Today, when you ſhall hear the voice of the Lord, harden not your ears and hearts.*

7. For that deſire or inclination once to turn, being the voice of GOD in man, the Devil endeavours to cover, or ſhut up the Soul, by the ideas, repreſentations, or images which he brings into the mind, to put off and delay the turning to GOD from one day to another, and from one year to another, until at length the Soul comes to be a very thiſtle, and can reach grace no more.

8. But let him that finds a deſire to turn to GOD, take it into his hearty conſideration,

tion, to examine his whole courſe of life, and compare it with the ten commandments, and with the love that is required by the goſpel, which commands him to love his neighbour as himſelf; and conſider that he is a child of grace only in CHRIST's love, and ſee how far he is departed from it: and what his daily practiſe, deſire, and inclination is. Then that drawing of the Father will bring him into the light of the righteouſneſs of GOD's dear Son, and ſhew him the images that are imprinted in his heart; which he has loved inſtead of GOD, and ſtill accounts them to be his beſt treaſure.

9. He ſhall then find thoſe images to be, Firſt, PRIDE, in liking and loving ſelf; and deſiring to be honoured by all others alſo: an image that inclines him to get power and dominion in his pride, that he may be honoured above all others. Secondly, he will find an image of a ſwine, namely, COVETOUSNESS, which would have all to itſelf only; and if it had the whole world, and heaven too, yet it would have the dominion in hell alſo; deſiring more than this temporal life has need of, and has no faith towards

wards GOD in it: but is as a defiled ſwine, that deſires to ſwallow all things into itſelf.

Thirdly, an image of ENVY, ſtinging the heart of all, envying and grudging that any other ſhould have more temporal goods and honour than itſelf has. Fourthly, an image of ANGER, which, when Envy as a poiſon dwells in it, will, upon any very little or frivolous occaſion, ſtorm, fight, wrangle, and be furious to revenge itſelf.

There will alſo be found a multitude of earthly beaſts, yea thouſands in him, which he loves and foſters; for he loves every thing that is in the world, having ſet it up in the ſtead of CHRIST, and honours it more than he does GOD. Let him but obſerve the words of his mouth, and ſee how his lips ſlander, upbraid, and ſpeak evil of others ſecretly, and ſets them forth in the worſt ſenſe; giving others the worſt character to their fellows, aſſociates, and familiar friends; and often backbite without any ſure ground or cauſe: rejoicing at his neighbour's miſhap, or the evil that comes upon him, and wiſhing it to him. All which are the paws, gins, ſnares, ſlights and tricks of

of the Devil, and the image of the ſerpent which man bears in him.

10. Let him compare all this with the Word in the Law and in the Goſpel, and he ſhall find that he is more a Beaſt and a Devil than a man; and ſhall clearly ſee how theſe hereditary, imprinted, ingraved, or graven images keep him back, and lead him aſtray from GOD; ſo that many times when he would fain repent, and turn to GOD, theſe paws and talons of the Devil keep him off; they keep him back, by perſuading the poor Soul, that this monſter, its Enemy! is holy, and its beſt friend:— And ſo too many Souls enter again into the luſts thereof; ſtick faſt in the anger of GOD; and at length go into the abyſs or bottomleſs pit, when the grace and drawing of the Father ceaſes.

11. We will tell the man that deſires to turn to GOD, our way that we have gone, and which we have tried. That as ſoon as he ſhall diſcover theſe beaſts, he ſhould that very moment take a reſolution, and bring himſelf into a will to depart from that beaſtial will, and by true repentance turn to GOD and goodneſs. And being he cannot do it by his own power, let him take the

promiſe of CHRIST into himſelf, when he ſaid, *Seek, and you ſhall find; knock, and it ſhall be opened unto you. No ſon aſketh bread of his father, and he giveth him a ſtone; or an egg, and he giveth him a ſcorpion.* And *if you, that are evil, can give good gifts unto your children, how much more ſhall my heavenly Father give the Holy Ghoſt to them that aſk him for it?*

12. Let him imprint this promiſe in his heart; for it is poiſon and death to the Devil, and to all hereditary, innate, and imprinted beaſts; and let him come immediately with theſe words of promiſe imprinted in his mind, and prayers, into the preſence of GOD. Then let him conſider with himſelf, that all theſe abominable beaſts are in himſelf: Let him think no otherwiſe of himſelf, than that he is the filthy keeper of ſwine, who had ſpent all his father's portion of goods that he beſtowed upon him; and alſo his birthright, upon thoſe ſwine of the world, namely, the evil beaſts in himſelf. That he now ſtands in the preſence of GOD, as a miſerable, naked, forlorn, ragged keeper of ſwine, that has ſpent and caſt away his Father's inheritance in whoredom with theſe worldly beaſts,

or graven images; and has now no more right to the grace of GOD, nor in the leaſt meaſure is worthy of it, much leſs to be called a Chriſtian, or the child of GOD. Let him alſo deſpair of availing himſelf by all the good works that ever he did; for they proceeded but from an hypocritical, ſeeming, or outſide holineſs, for which the man would be accounted an Angel, that is inwardly a Devil; for *without faith it is impoſſible to pleaſe* GOD! as the ſcripture ſays.

13. But let him not deſpair of the divine grace that is in him, and leads him to deſire to turn to GOD; but of himſelf only, and of his own power and ſtrength. Let him, with all the power and ſtrength he has, bow down himſelf in his Soul, in the preſence of GOD. And though his own heart be utterly againſt it, and ſay to him to do it not, ſtay awhile, it will not be convenient to-day: or, if it ſay, thy ſins are too too great; it cannot be that thou ſhould attain the grace of GOD: and ſo he comes into ſuch anguiſh that he cannot pray to GOD, and receives no comfort, nor ſtrength in his heart; but is as if his ſoul was quite blind, and dead to GOD and goodneſs; yet

he muſt be reſolute; conſidering the promiſe of GOD is a certain infallible truth: and with a ſubmiſſive heart ſigh to the grace of GOD; and in his great unworthineſs wholly reſign himſelf thereto.

14. And though he do eſteem himſelf unworthy, as a ſtranger and alien, to whom the inheritance of CHRIST does not any more belong, he having loſt his right: yet he ſhould ſtedfaſtly rely upon that which CHRIST ſaid; knowing that what he ſaid is certainly true; that he came *to ſeek and to ſave that which was loſt*, namely, the poor ſinner that is blind and dead to GOD. He muſt firmly imprint this promiſe in himſelf, and take to himſelf ſuch a ſtrong purpoſe and reſolution, that he will not go forth from the promiſed grace of GOD in CHRIST, though body and ſoul ſhould be broken to pieces; and though he ſhould get no comfort in his heart all the days of his life; or the leaſt aſſurance of the remiſſion of his ſins; conſidering that the promiſes of GOD are more ſure and firm than all comfort whatſoever.

15. Alſo let him purpoſe to himſelf, and ſhut up his will ſo firmly in this reſolution, that he will no more enter into the former beaſtial

beaſtial images and vices again, though all his ſwine and beaſts in him ſhould lament to the death the loſs of their food and paſture; and he himſelf ſhould be a fool in the account of all the world for ſo doing; yet he would be conſtant in his purpoſe, in cleaving to the promiſed grace of GOD: and if he muſt come to be a child of death, he would deſire to be ſo in the death of CHRIST, to die and live to him at his pleaſure; and let him order and direct his purpoſe in continually praying and ſighing to GOD, and commit all his endeavours and doings, in the works of his hands, unto GOD; and ceaſe from the imagination, or thought of Pride, Covetouſneſs, or Envy; let him but deliver up theſe three beaſts, and the reſt will ſoon become weak, faint, and ready to die: for CHRIST will ſoon get a form in the words of his promiſe, which that man imprints in himſelf, and cloaths himſelf withal; and ſo come to life, and begin to work in him; whereby his prayers will be more powerful, and he be more and more ſtrengthened and confirmed in the ſpirit of grace.

16. And as the ſeed in the mother's womb undergoes the caſualties of nature, and ma-

ny outward accidents, in growing to be a child, until it gets life in the mother's womb; ſo here, the more a man goes forth from himſelf out of theſe images, through much oppoſition, the more he enters into GOD, until at length CHRIST comes to be living in the incorporated grace; which comes to be ſo, in the greateſt earneſtneſs of his purpoſe: upon which there preſently follows the eſpouſing or contract with the worthy humanity of CHRIST, where the Soul and the humanity of CHRIST embrace one another with joy; and together with the moſt inward deſire penetrate into the moſt ſweet love of GOD; and preſently the marriage of the Lamb is ready, where the worthy humanity of CHRIST is united to the Soul. Now what is done, and the joy that is celebrated, CHRIST intimates, ſaying, *There is greater joy in the heaven*, which is, in man, and in the angels, *in the preſence of God, for one ſinner that repenteth, than for ninety and nine righteous, that need no repentance.*

17. But we have no pen, nor words that can expreſs what that exceeding ſweet grace of GOD in the humanity of CHRIST is; and what they enjoy, that come worthily to the marriage of the Lamb: which we ourſelves have

have found by experience in this our way and courſe, and know for certain, that we have a ſure ground from which we write: and we would from the bottom of our heart willingly impart and communicate it to our brethren in the love of CHRIST; and if it be poſſible for them to believe our faithful childiſh counſel, they would find by experience in themſelves, from whence it is that this ſimple hand knows and underſtands theſe great myſteries.

18. But having heretofore written a large Treatiſe of Repentance, and Regeneration, therefore here we forbear to write more than this ſhort direction, and refer the Reader to thoſe treatiſes, as alſo to the great work upon *Geneſis*; and there he ſhall find the ground of whatſoever he will, or can aſk, ſufficiently laid down: and we chriſtianly admoniſh him, that he will follow this way and courſe, and then he ſhall attain the Divine Viſion in himſelf, and hear what the LORD thro' CHRIST ſpeaks in him: and herewith we commend him to the love of CHRIST.

OF

TRUE RESIGNATION.

CHAP. I.

1. WE have a clear example in *Lucifer*, and alſo in *Adam* the firſt man, of what ſelf does, when it gets the light of nature to be its own, and may walk with the underſtanding in its own dominion. We ſee it alſo in men learned in arts and ſciences, that when they get the light of this outward world or nature, into the poſſeſſion of their reaſon, nothing comes of it but pride of themſelves. And yet all the world do vehemently deſire and ſeek after this light, as the beſt treaſure; and indeed it is the beſt treaſure this world affords, if it be rightly uſed.

2. But while ſelf, that is, reaſon, is enſnared and faſt bound in a cloſe and ſtrong priſon, namely, in the anger of GOD, and in earthlineſs; it is very dangerous for a man

to make uſe of the light of knowledge in ſelf, as if it were in the poſſeſſion of ſelf.

3. For the wrath of the eternal and temporary nature, will ſoon take pleaſure in it, and then ſelf, and a man's own reaſon, will riſe up in pride, and break itſelf off from the true reſigned humility towards GOD, and will no more eat of the fruit of paradiſe, but of the property of ſelf, namely, of that dominion of life, wherein good and evil are mixed; as *Lucifer* and *Adam* did; who both entered with the deſire of ſelf, into the original again, out of which the creatures were brought forth, and entered into the condition of the creatures; *Lucifer* into the center and wrathful nature, into the matrix or womb which brings forth fire: and *Adam* into the earthly nature, into the matrix of the outward world, namely, into the luſt after good and evil.

4. This happened to both of them, becauſe they had the light of underſtanding ſhining in ſelf: wherein they could behold themſelves; and by it the ſpirit of ſelf went into the imagination, namely, into a deſire to get into the center, that they might exalt themſelves, and ſo grow great, potent, and moſt ſkilful. Now when *Lucifer* ſought

after the mother of fire in his own center, and thought to reign therewith over the love of GOD, and all the angels; and when *Adam* alſo deſired to try in the eſſence, what it was in the mother that produced evil and good, and from whence they did ſpring: he brought his deſire into her purpoſely to become ſkilful, and full of underſtanding thereby. Both *Lucifer* and *Adam* were thereby captivated in their evil, or falſe deſire in the mother, and did break off themſelves from reſignation, which proceeds from GOD; and ſo were captivated by the ſpirit of the will, by the deſire in the mother, which deſire did get the dominion in nature; and ſo *Lucifer* ſtuck faſt in the wrathful ſource of fire, and that fire became manifeſt in the ſpirit of his will, whereby the creature became an enemy to the love and meekneſs of GOD.

5. So alſo *Adam* was caught by the earthly mother, which is evil and good, created out of the love and anger of GOD, and made one ſubſtance; whereby the earthly property got the dominion in *Adam*, and from thence heat and cold, envy and anger, and all malice and contrariety againſt GOD, became manifeſt and did bear rule in him.

6. But

6. But if they had not brought the light of knowledge into ſelf, then the glaſs of the knowledge of the center, and of the original of the creature, had not been manifeſted: namely, the power of ſelf, from whence the imagination and luſt did ariſe.

7. As we alſo now ſee it brings danger upon the enlightened children of GOD; for when the ſun of the great preſence of GOD's holineſs ſhines, by which the life paſſes into triumph, and reaſon beholds itſelf therein, as in a glaſs; and the will goes on in ſelf, namely, in its own ſearching, and will try what the center is out of which the light ſhines, and will of itſelf force into it: then ariſes abominable pride, and ſelf-love, ſo that the creatures reaſon, which is but a mirror or glaſs of the eternal wiſdom, ſuppoſes itſelf to be greater than it is; and then whatſoever its reaſon does, it thinks GOD's will does it in it, and that it is a prophet; and yet reaſon is but in ſelf, and goes on in its own deſire, in which the center of nature ſuddenly ariſes aloft, and enters into that own ſelf deſire, which is falſhood againſt GOD, and ſo the will enters into ſelf-conceitedneſs.

8. And

8. And then the flattering devil enters into it, and ſifts the center of nature, and brings evil, or falſe deſires into the creature, ſo that a man becomes as it were drunk in ſelf, and perſuades himſelf that he is led by GOD: by which the good beginning wherein the divine light did ſhine in nature, comes to be ſpoiled, and ſo the light of GOD departs from him.

9. Yet then the outward light of reaſon, or of the outward nature, continues ſhining in the creature; for ſelf throws itſelf thereinto, and then ſuppoſes it ſtill to be the firſt light of GOD; but it is not ſo: for into this ſelf-conceitedneſs in the light of its outward reaſon, the devil throws himſelf again, (though in the firſt light which was divine, he was forced to depart) returning with a ſeven-fold deſire: of which CHRIST ſpake, *Matt.* xii. 43—46. ſaying, *When the unclean ſpirit departeth out of a man, he wandereth through dry places, ſeeking reſt, and findeth none; and then he taketh with himſelf ſeven other ſpirits more wicked than himſelf, and returneth to his firſt houſe, and findeth it ſwept and garniſhed; and he dwells therein, and the ſtate of that man is worſe than it was before.*

10. This

10. This houſe, that is thus ſwept and garniſhed, is the light of reaſon in ſelf; for if a man bring his deſire and will into GOD, and goes on in abſtinence from this wicked life, and deſires the love of GOD, then that love will manifeſt itſelf to him with its moſt friendly and cheerful countenance, by which alſo the outward light of reaſon is kindled; for where the light of GOD is, there all will be light, the devil cannot ſtay there, he muſt depart thence; he then ſearches through the mother of the original of life, namely, the center, but it is become a dry feeble place: the anger of GOD, namely, the center of nature, is in its own property altogether feeble, or barren, lean and dry, and cannot get the dominion in the wrathful property. Satan ſearches through thoſe places to find an open gate to enter with the deſire, and ſo ſift the ſoul that it might come to exalt itſelf.

11. And now if the ſpirit of the will of the creature do throw itſelf, with the light of reaſon, into the center, namely, into ſelf, and enters into ſelf-conceitedneſs, then it goes forth again from the light of GOD, and then the devil finds an open gate for him to enter in at, and a garniſhed houſe to

dwell

dwell in, namely, the light of reaſon: and then he takes to himſelf the ſeven forms of the property of life in ſelf, namely, the flatterers (or ſenſes) which are departed from GOD into ſelf; and there he enters and puts his deſire into the luſt of ſelf and evil imaginations, wherein the ſpirit of the will beholds itſelf in the forms of the properties of life, in the outward light, and there that man ſinks into himſelf as if he was drunk, and then the conſtellations lay hold of him, that he may ſeek the wonders of GOD in his outward reaſon.

12. Then this man goes on in the light of outward reaſon, which is called the ſtars, and apprehends great and wonderful things, and has a continual guide in them: and then the devil preſently obſerves where any gate of the mind ſtands open for him, where he may kindle the center of life, that ſo the ſpirit of the will may mount aloft in pride, in ſelf-conceit, or covetouſneſs; from whence ſelf-arrogance ariſes, the will of reaſon deſiring to be honoured, for it ſuppoſes it has attained the ſum of all happineſs, when it has got the light of reaſon. The creature now ſuppoſes that the honour is due to him becauſe he has got the underſtanding of reaſon,

ſon, and never conſiders that the devil makes himſelf merry with his deſire in his ſeven forms of life, of the center of nature, nor what abominable error he ſets up.

13. From this underſtanding in reaſon, *Babel* is brought forth in the chriſtian church on earth, where men teach and rule by the concluſions of reaſon, and have ſet the child that is drunk in its own pride and ſelf-covetouſneſs, as a fair virgin upon the throne.

14. But the devil is entered into its ſeven forms of life of the center, namely, in its own ſelf-conceited reaſon! and continually brings his deſire into this trimmed virgin; which the ſtars receive. He is her beaſt on which ſhe rides, well adorned in her own forces of life, as may be ſeen in the *Revelation.* Thus the creature's ſelf-conceited reaſon has taken into poſſeſſion the outward glance of divine holineſs, namely, the light of reaſon, and ſuppoſes itſelf to be the fair child in the houſe; but the devil has its lodging within it.

15. And thus it is with all thoſe that have been once enlightened by GOD, and after go forth again from true reſignation, and wean themſelves from the true milk of their mother, namely, true humility.

The

The way that a true Chriſtian muſt follow.

16. Reaſon will object and ſay: Is it not right for a man to attain the light of GOD, and alſo the light of the outward nature and reaſon, that he may be able to order his life wiſely, as the ſcripture ſays.

17. Yes, it is very right, nothing can be more profitable to a man, neither can any better thing happen to him; nay, it is a treaſure above all earthly treaſures, for a man to have the light of GOD, and of time, (or reaſon) for it is the eye of time, and of eternity.

18. But mark how thou ought to uſe it: the light of GOD firſt manifeſts itſelf in the ſoul, it ſhines forth as light from a candle, and kindles the outward light of reaſon immediately; yet it yields not itſelf wholly up to reaſon, to be under the dominion of the outward man: no, the outward man beholds himſelf in this, through ſhining luſtre, as he does his likeneſs in a looking-glaſs; he may preſently learn to know himſelf, which is good and profitable for him.

19. And when he do ſo, reaſon, which is the creaturely ſelf, cannot do better than behold itſelf in the ſelf of the creature, nor to enter with the will of the deſire into the

center,

center, in ſeeking itſelf; if it do it breaks itſelf off from the ſubſtance of GOD (which riſes together with the light of GOD, of which the ſoul ought to eat, and refreſh itſelf therewith) and eats of the outward ſubſtance and light, and thereby draws the venom into itſelf again.

20. The will of the creature ought to ſink wholly into itſelf, with all its reaſon and deſire, accounting itſelf an unworthy child, that is no whit worthy of this ſo high a grace, nor ſhould it arrogate any knowledge or underſtanding to itſelf, or deſire or beg of GOD to have any underſtanding in its creaturely ſelf, but ſincerely and ſimply ſink itſelf into the grace and love of GOD in CHRIST JESUS, and deſire to be as it were dead to itſelf and its own reaſon in the divine life, and wholly reſign itſelf to the life of GOD in love, that he may do how and what he will with it, as with his own inſtrument.

21. Its own reaſon ought not to enter upon any ſpeculation in divine, or in the ground or foundation of human matters; nor to will and deſire any thing but the grace of GOD in CHRIST; and as a child continually longs after the breaſts of the

mother,

mother, ſo muſt its hunger continually enter into the love of GOD, and not ſuffer itſelf to be broken off from this hunger by any means, when the outward reaſon triumphs in the light, ſaying, I have the true child; but then the will of the deſire muſt bow itſelf down to the earth, and bring itſelf into the deepeſt humility and ſimple ignorance, and ſay, thou are fooliſh, and has nothing but the grace of GOD; thou muſt wrap thyſelf up into that with great humility, and become nothing at all in thyſelf, and neither know nor love thyſelf; all that thou has, or is in thee, muſt eſteem itſelf as nothing but a meer inſtrument of GOD, and then muſt bring the deſire only into GOD's mercy, and go forth from all thy own knowing and willing, and eſteem it as nothing at all, nor muſt thou ever entertain any will to enter into it again.

22. As ſoon as this is done, the natural will enters into weakneſs, and then the Devil is not able to ſift it thus any more with his evil (or falſe) deſire: for the places of his reſt become very weak (or fruitleſs, or barren) and dry, and then the holy Spirit proceeding from GOD, takes poſſeſſion of the forms of life, and makes his dominion prevail;

vail; namely, he kindles the forms of life with his flames of love; and then the high ſkill and knowledge of the center of all things ariſes, according to the inward and outward conſtellation of the creature, in a very ſubtle, drying fire, with great delight, and deſires to ſink down into that Light, and eſteem itſelf nothing, and thinks itſelf to be unworthy of it.

23. And thus its own deſire pierces into that nothing, (namely, into that wherein GOD creates) and does what he will therein; and the Spirit of GOD ſprings forth through the deſire of the reſigned humility; and ſo the human ſelf immediately follows the Spirit of GOD in trembling and joy of humility; and ſo it may behold what it is in time and eternity, for all is preſent before it.

24. When the Spirit of GOD riſes up as a fire and the flame of love, then the ſpirit of the Soul deſcends, and ſays, LORD, Glory be to thy Name, not to me; thou art able to take virtue, power, ſtrength, wiſdom, and knowledge; do as thou will, I can do nothing; I know nothing; I will go no whither but whither thou leadeſt me as

as thy inſtrument: do thou in me and with me what thou will.

25. In ſuch an humble and total reſignation, the ſpark of divine power falls into the center of the forms of life, (as a ſpark into tinder) and kindles it, namely, the fire (the earneſt zeal) of the ſoul, (which *Adam* made to be a dark coal in himſelf) ſo that it glimmers: and when the light of divine power has kindled itſelf therein, the creature muſt go on as an inſtrument of GOD's Spirit, and ſpeak what the Spirit of GOD tells (or prompts) it; and then it is no more in its own proper poſſeſſion, but it is the inſtrument of GOD.

26. But the will of the Soul muſt without ceaſing ſink into nothing, namely, into the deepeſt humility in the ſight of GOD. For no ſooner does the will of the Soul, in the leaſt meaſure, go on in its own ſpeculation, or ſearching, but *Lucifer* lays hold of it in the center of the forms of life, and ſifts it, ſo that it enters into ſelf; it muſt therefore continue cloſe to reſigned humility, as a well does to its fountain, and muſt ſuck and drink of GOD's fountain, and not depart from the ways of GOD at all.

27. For,

27. For, as ſoon as the Soul eats of ſelf, and of the light of outward reaſon, it goes on in its own opinion; and then its doings, which it ſets forth for divine, are but from the outward conſtellation, which then preſently lays hold on the Soul, and makes it dry; and then the Soul goes on in errors, until it yield itſelf up again into reſignation, and acknowledges itſelf anew to be a defiled child, reſiſting reaſon, and ſo getting the love of GOD again, which is harder to do now than it was at firſt; for the ſtrong Devil brings in ſtrong doubts, he will not eaſily leave his fort of prey.

28. This may be ſeen clearly in the ſaints of GOD from the beginning of the world; that many who have been driven by the Spirit of GOD, have yet oftentimes departed from reſignation into ſelf, namely, into their own reaſon and will, in which Satan has caſt them into ſins, and into the anger of GOD, as appears by *David* and *Solomon*, alſo by the Patriarchs, Prophets, and Apoſtles: who oftentimes committed great errors, when they departed from reſignation into ſelf, namely, into their own reaſon and luſt.

29. Therefore it is neceſſary for the children of GOD to know how to behave themſelves.

ſelves when they will learn the way of GOD. They muſt beat down and caſt away their very thoughts, and deſire nothing, nor have the leaſt will to learn any thing, unleſs they find themſelves to be in true reſignation: ſo that GOD's Spirit leads, teaches, and guides man's ſpirit, and that the human will which is addicted to itſelf, be wholly broken off from its own luſt, and reſigned in GOD.

30. All ſpeculation in the wonders of GOD is very dangerous, for the ſpirit of the will may be ſoon captivated therewith, unleſs the ſpirit of the will goes or walks after the Spirit of GOD, and then it has power in the reſigned humility, to behold the wonders of GOD.

31. I do not ſay that a man ſhould ſearch and learn nothing in natural arts, and ſciences; no, for it is profitable for him: but a man muſt not begin with his own reaſon: Man ought not only to govern his life by the light of outward reaſon, which is good in itſelf, but he muſt ſink with that light into the deepeſt humility before GOD, and ſet the Spirit and will of GOD firſt in all his ſearching, ſo that the light of reaſon may ſee through the light of GOD. And tho'

reaſon

reaſon do know much, it muſt not arrogate to itſelf as if it was in its own poſſeſſion, but give glory to GOD, to whom alone wiſdom and knowledge does belong.

32. For the more reaſon ſinks itſelf down into ſimple humility in the ſight of GOD, and the more unworthy it accounts itſelf, the more it dies from ſelf-deſire, and the more the Spirit of GOD pierces through it, and brings it into the higheſt knowledge; ſo that it may behold the great wonders of GOD. For the Spirit of GOD works only in reſigned humility, in that which neither ſeeks nor deſires itſelf. The Spirit of GOD takes hold of whatſoever deſires to be ſimple and lowly before him, and brings it forth in his wonders; he has pleaſure only in thoſe that fear, and bow themſelves before him.

33. For GOD has not created us for ourſelves only, but to be inſtruments of his wonders, by which he deſires to manifeſt his wonders. The reſigned will truſts GOD, and expects all good from him; but ſelf-will rules itſelf, for it is broken off from GOD. All that ſelf-will does is ſin, and againſt GOD, for it is gone out of that order wherein GOD created it, into diſobedience, nd deſires to be its own lord and maſter.

34. When

34. When its own will dies from itſelf, then it is free from ſin, for it deſires nothing but that which GOD deſires of his creature; it deſires only to do that for which GOD has created it, and that which GOD will do by it; and though it is and muſt be the doing, yet it is but the inſtrument of the doing, by which GOD does what he will.

35. For this is the true faith in man, namely, to die from himſelf, that is, from his own deſire; and in all his beginnings and deſigns, to bring his deſire into the will of GOD, and not arrogate to himſelf the doing any thing, but eſteem himſelf in all his doings, to be but a ſervant or miniſter of GOD, and to think that all he does, or goes about, is for GOD: for in ſuch an intention the Spirit of GOD leads him into true uprightneſs, and faithfulneſs towards his neighbour: for he thinks thus with himſelf; I do my work not for myſelf, but for GOD, who has called and ordained me to do it, as a ſervant in his vineyard; he liſtens continually after the voice of his Maſter, who within commands him what he ſhall do: the LORD ſpeaks in him, and bids him to do it.

36. But

36. But ſelf does what outward reaſon from the ſtars commands, into which reaſon the Devil brings himſelf, flying in with his deſire. All whatever ſelf does, is without the will of GOD, and it is done altogether in the fanſy, and the anger of GOD is executed therewith.

37. No work that is done without the will of GOD, can reach the kingdom of GOD. It is all but unprofitable imagery in this great turmoiling of mankind; for nothing is pleaſing to GOD, but what he himſelf does by the will, as his inſtrument. For there is but one only GOD in the eſſence of all eſſences, and all that which works with him in that eſſence, is one Spirit with him, but that which works in itſelf, in its own will, is itſelf without being under his dominion; although it is indeed under, or in that dominion wherewith GOD rules every life; but not in, or under that holy divine government in himſelf; it is in the dominion of nature, wherewith GOD governs evil and good: and nothing is divine which walks and works not in the will of GOD.

38. CHRIST ſays, *Every plant which my heavenly Father has not planted, ſhall be rooted out, and burnt in the fire.* All the works

of man that he has wrought without the will of GOD, ſhall be burnt up in the laſt fire of GOD, and given to the wrath of GOD; that is, to the pit of darkneſs, to recreate itſelf withal; for CHRIST ſays, *He that is not with me, is againſt me; and he that gathereth not with me, ſcattereth.* Whoſoever works, and does it not in a reſigned will, with confidence in GOD, he does but make deſolate, and ſcatter: it is not acceptable to GOD. Nothing is pleaſing to GOD but that which himſelf wills with his Spirit, and does himſelf by his own inſtrument.

39. Therefore, whatſoever is done by the concluſions of human ſelf, in matters of the divine will and knowledge, is a meer fiction, or fable, and it is Babel, and is but a work of the ſtars, and of the outward world, and not acknowledged by GOD to be his work; but it is of the wreſtling wheel of nature, wherein good and evil wreſtle one with the other, what the good builds the evil deſtroys. And this is the great miſery of man's vain turmoilings, all which belongs to the judgement of GOD to decide.

40. Whoſoever therefore works or labours much in ſuch turmoilings, he works but for the judgement of GOD, for no whit

of

of it is durable or permanent, it muſt all be ſeparated in the putrefaction. For that which is wrought in the anger of GOD, will be received thereby, and ſhall be kept in the myſtery of its deſire, to the day of GOD's judgement, where evil and good ſhall be ſevered.

41. But if a man turn and go forth from himſelf, and enter into the will of GOD, then alſo that good which he has wrought in himſelf, ſhall be freed from the evil that he has wrought. For *Iſaiah* ſays, *Though your ſins be as red as ſcarlet*, if ye turn and repent, *they ſhall become as wool, as white as ſnow*; ſee Chap. i. from verſe 16. for the evil ſhall be ſwallowed up in the wrath of GOD into death, and the good ſhall go forth as a ſprout out of the wild earth.

CHAP. II.

1. WHoſoever intends to work anything that is good and perfect, wherein he hopes eternally to rejoice, and enjoy it, let him depart from himſelf, namely, from his own deſire, and enter into reſignation, into the will of GOD, and work with GOD; and though the earthly deſire of ſelf

in fleſh and blood cleave to him, yet if the will of the Soul do not receive that deſire into it, ſelf cannot perform any work; for the reſigned will continually deſtroys the being of ſelf again, ſo that the anger of GOD cannot reach it; but if it ſhould happen to reach it ſometime, as it may ſo come to paſs, yet the reſigned will prevails with its power, and then it bears the figure of a victorious work in the wonders, and may inherit the filiation, or childſhip. Therefore it is not good to ſpeak or do any thing, when reaſon is kindled in the deſire of ſelf; for then the deſire works in the anger of GOD, by which a man would ſuffer loſs: for his work is brought into the anger of GOD, and kept there to the great day of GOD's judgement.

2. Every evil, or falſe deſire, whereby a man thinks craftily to gather to himſelf much of the world from his neighbour, to the hurt of his neighbour, is taken into the anger of GOD, and belongs to the judgement, wherein all things ſhall be made manifeſt, and every power, and eſſence (or being) both in good and evil, ſhall be preſented to every one in the myſtery of the revelation.

3. All

3. All evil works done purpoſely, belong to the judgement of GOD; but he that turns, he goes out from them, and thoſe his works belong to the fire. All things ſhall and muſt be made manifeſt in the end, for therefore GOD brought his working power into eſſence; that the love and anger of GOD might be made manifeſt, and be a repreſentation of GOD's deeds of wonder, to his glory.

4. And every creature muſt know, that it ſhould continue in that condition wherein it was created, or elſe it does run in a contrary will, and into enmity to the will of GOD, and brings itſelf into pain; for a creature which is created of darkneſs, has no pain in the darkneſs; as a venomous worm has no pain in its venom, for the venom is its life; and if it ſhould loſe its venom, and have ſome good thing brought into it inſtead thereof, and be made manifeſt in its eſſence, this would be pain and death to it; and ſo alſo the evil is pain and death to the good.

5. Man was created of, for, and in paradiſe; of, for, and in the love of GOD; but if he bring himſelf into anger, which

is a poiſonous pain and death, then that contrary life is a pain and torment to him.

6. If the Devil had been created of the wrathful matrix, for and in hell, and had not had the divine eſſence, he could have no pain in hell; but he being created for, and in heaven, and yet did ſtir up the ſource or property of darkneſs in himſelf, and did bring himſelf totally into darkneſs; therefore the light is now a pain to him, that is, an everlaſting deſpairing of GOD's grace, and a continual enmity, being GOD cannot endure him in himſelf, but has ſpewed him out, and therefore is angry and wrathful againſt his own mother, that is, eternal nature, of whoſe eſſence and being he has his original, and which keeps him priſoner in his own place, as a revolter or fallen ſpirit, and ſupports itſelf in him, with its property of anger and wrath. And ſeeing he would not help forward the delight of the divine joy, therefore he muſt now do the contrary, and be an enemy againſt goodneſs. For, of GOD, and in him, are all things, darkneſs and light, love and anger, fire and light, but he calls himſelf GOD only, as to the light of his love.

7. There

7. There is an eternal contrariety between darkneſs and light, neither of them comprehends the other, yet there is but one only eſſence, being, or ſubſtance wherein they ſubſiſt, but there is a difference in quality and will, and yet the eſſence or ſubſtance is not divided, but a principle maketh the diviſion, ſo that the one is a nothing in the other, and yet it is there, but not manifeſt in the property of that thing wherein it is.

8. For the devil continued in his own dominion, or principality, but not in that wherein GOD created him, but in the aching, painful birth of eternity, in the center of nature, and the property of wrath, in the property which begets darkneſs, anguiſh and pain; indeed he is a prince in the place of this world; yet in the firſt principle in the kingdom of darkneſs, in the pit, or abyſs.

9. But not in the kingdom of the ſun, ſtars, and elements, he is no lord or prince therein, but in the wrathful part, namely, in the root of the evil of every thing, and yet he has no power to do what he pleaſes with it.

10. For there is ſome good in all things, which holds the evil captive, and ſhuts it

up in the thing; there he can walk and rule only in the evil, when it ſtirs up an evil deſire in itſelf, and brings its deſire into wickedneſs; which the inanimate creatures cannot do: but man can do it through the inanimate creature, if he bring the center of his will, with the deſire out of the eternal center into it, which is an inchantment, and falſe magic. The will of the devil can alſo enter into that evil whereinto man brings the deſire of his ſoul, which is alſo from the eternal center, in wickedneſs.

11. For the original of the ſoul, and of all angels, is out of the eternal nature, the ſame. But the devil has no power over the time, or temporary condition of this world, but in the curſe, whereſoever that kindles itſelf in the eternal and natural wrath, there he is buſy, as in wars, fighting and ſtrife, as alſo in great tempeſts: in the fire he proceeds as far as the miſchief or hurt goes, in great ſhowers and tempeſts of thunder, lightening and hail; but he cannot direct them; for he is not lord and maſter in them, but ſervant.

12. Thus the creature ſtirs up, with the deſire, good and evil, life and death. The human angelical deſire ſtands in the center

of

of the eternal nature (which is without beginning) and wherein it kindles itſelf, whether in good or evil, it accompliſhes its work in that.

13. NOW GOD created every thing for, and in that wherein it ſhould be, the angels for and in heaven, and man for and in paradiſe: if therefore the deſire of the creature go forth from its own mother, then it enters into the contrary will, and into enmity, and it is tormented with the contrariety therein, and ſo a falſe will ariſes in a good: and then the good will returns into its nothing again, namely, into the end of nature and creature, and ſo leaves the creature in its own evil, or wickedneſs, as appears by *Lucifer*, and alſo by *Adam*; and had not the love of the will of GOD met with him, and of meer mercy entered into the humanity again, there could be no good will in man.

14. Therefore all ſpeculation, and ſearching about GOD's will, is a vain thing, without the mind be converted: for when the mind ſtands captivated in the ſelf-deſire of the earthly life, it cannot comprehend what the will of GOD is. It runs on but in ſelf, from one way into another, and yet finds no

reſt; for ſelf-deſire evermore brings diſquietneſs: but when it ſinks itſelf wholly into the mercy of GOD, deſiring to die from itſelf, and to have GOD's will for a guide to the underſtanding, ſo that it acknowledges and eſteems itſelf as nothing, and wills nothing but what GOD will: and then if the deſire of anger in the earthly fleſh, go along or joins with the devil's imagination, and aſſaults the will of the ſoul, then the reſigned deſire crys to GOD, and ſays, Abba, loving Father, deliver me from this evil: and then, though the earthly will ſhould grow too ſtrong in the wrath of GOD by the infection of the devil, the deſire of anger would work but in or upon itſelf; as the apoſtle ſays, *Now if I ſin, I do it not, but ſin that dwells in my fleſh:* alſo, *now I ſerve the law of God in my mind, but in my fleſh the law of ſin.* The apoſtle means not that the will of the ſoul ſhould conſent in the leaſt to the will of the fleſh; but that ſin is oftentimes ſo ſtrong in the fleſh, that it awakens the anger of GOD in ſelf, and it is brought into luſt by force through the evil temptations of wicked men, or elſe by beholding worldly pomp and glory, ſo that the reſigned will is deafened, and ruled by force.

15. Now

15. Now when ſin is wrought in the fleſh, then the wrath catches at the reſigned will, and then the reſigned will cries to GOD for deliverance from the evil, and prays that GOD would remove the ſin away from it, and bring ſin into death, that it might die.

16. And the apoſtle *Paul* ſays farther, *Now there is no condemnation to thoſe that are in Chriſt Jeſus, that are called according to the purpoſe of God*; that is, thoſe that in that purpoſe of GOD, in which GOD called man, are again called in the ſame calling, to ſtand again in that purpoſe of GOD, wherein he created man to be his likeneſs and image of him.

17. So long as a man's own will ſtands in ſelf, ſo long it is not in the purpoſe and calling of GOD, it is not called, for it is gone forth from its own place; but when the mind turns itſelf back again into the calling, namely, into reſignation, then the will is in the calling of GOD, namely, in the place for and in which GOD created it; and then it has power to become the child of GOD; as it is written, *He has given us power to become the children of God.*

18. This power which he has given us, is his purpoſe, for and in which he created man.

man in his image; this GOD has brought again into the humanity, and he has given power unto that power, to break the head of ſin in the fleſh, namely, the will and deſire of the ſerpent, and kills again the ſins which were committed. This power that is given becomes a death to death, and the power of life to life.

19. Therefore no man can make any excuſe, as if he could not will. Indeed while he ſticks faſt in himſelf, in his own deſire, and ſerves only the law of ſin in the fleſh, he cannot: for he is kept back as being the ſervant of ſin; but when he turns the center of his mind away, and turns into the will and obedience of GOD, then he can.

20. Now the center of the mind is come out of eternity, out of GOD's omnipotence, it can bring itſelf into what it will, and whether it will: for that which is out of the eternal has no law; but the will has a law to obey GOD, and is born out of the mind, and it muſt not rend itſelf away from that out of which GOD created it.

21. Now GOD created the will of the mind for and in paradiſe, to be a companion with him in the kingdom of divine joy, it ought not to have removed itſelf from thence; but

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ſince it has removed itſelf from thence, GOD has brought his will again into the fleſh, and in his new brought-in will, has given us power to bring our will into it, and to kindle a new light in it, and ſo to become his children again.

22. GOD hardens no man; but man's own will which goes on, or perſeveres in the fleſh of ſin, that hardens the mind, namely, the will of ſelf, it is that brings the vanity of this world into the mind, and ſo the mind is ſhut up, and continues ſo.

23. GOD, ſo far as he is called GOD, and is GOD, cannot will any evil; for there is but one only will in GOD, and that is eternal love, a deſire of that which is like, namely, power, beauty and virtue.

24. GOD deſires nothing but what is like his deſire, his deſire receives nothing but what itſelf is.

25. GOD receives no ſinner into his power and virtue, unleſs the ſinner go forth from his ſins, and enters with the deſire into him: and he will not caſt out them that come unto him; he has given to the will an open gate in CHRIST, ſaying, *Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden with ſins, I will refreſh you; take my yoke upon you*, that is, the croſs

of

of the enmity in the fleſh, which was the yoke of CHRIST, who muſt bear it for the ſins of all men. This croſs the reſigned will muſt take upon it, in the evil earthly ſinful fleſh, and bear it after CHRIST in patience, in hope of deliverance, and always break the head of the ſerpent with the reſigned will of the ſoul, in CHRIST's will and ſpirit, and kill and deſtroy the earthly will in GOD's anger, and not let it reſt on a ſoft bed when ſin is committed, thinking I will repent one time or other.

26. No, no, the earthly will grows ſtrong, fat and wanton, upon this ſoft bed: but ſo ſoon as the breath of GOD ſhines in thee, and ſhews ſin to thee, the will of the ſoul muſt ſink itſelf down into the paſſion and death of CHRIST, and wrap itſelf up cloſe in it, and take the paſſion of CHRIST into its poſſeſſion, and be a lord over the death of ſin by the death of CHRIST, and kill it and deſtroy it in the death of CHRIST.

27. It muſt die, though it be never ſo unwilling: be at enmity with the voluptuous earthly fleſh, give it not what it would have; let it faſt and ſuffer hunger till its tickling ceaſe; account the will of the fleſh thy enemy, and do not what the deſire in

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the fleſh will, and then thou ſhall bring a death into the death in the fleſh.

28. Regard not any ſcorn of the world, think they do but ſcorn thy enemy, and that it is become a fool to them; nay, do thou thyſelf account it thy fool, which *Adam* cauſed thee to have in thee, and ſuffered to be thy falſe heir. Caſt the ſon of the bondwoman out of the houſe, (that ſtrange child which GOD did not give to be in the houſe of life in *Adam* at the beginning) for the ſon of the bondwoman muſt not inherit with the ſon of the freewoman.

29. The earthly will is but the ſon of the bondwoman: for the four elements ſhould have been ſervants to man, but *Adam* has brought them into filiation, or childſhip: therefore GOD ſaid to *Abraham*, when he had opened the covenant of the promiſe in him, *Caſt out the ſon of the bondwoman, for he ſhall not inherit with the ſon of the free.* This ſon of the free is CHRIST, which GOD of his grace has brought again into the fleſh for us, namely, a renewed or new mind, wherein the will, that is, the eternal will of the ſoul, may draw and drink the water of life, of which CHRIST ſpeaks, ſaying, *Whoſoever ſhall drink of this water that he will*

give

give us, it ſhall ſpring up in him, and be a fountain of eternal life. This fountain is the renovation of the mind of the ſoul, namely, of the eternal nature of the creaturely property of the ſoul.

30. Therefore all fictions and devices to come to GOD by, let them have what name ſoever they will, which men contrive and invent for ways to GOD, are loſt labour, and unprofitable, without a new mind. There is no other way to GOD but a new mind, which turns from wickedneſs, and enters into repentance for the ſins it has committed; that goes out from its iniquity, and wills it no more, but wraps its will up in the death of CHRIST, and with all earneſtneſs dies from the ſin of the ſoul in the death of CHRIST, ſo that the mind of the ſoul wills ſin no more.

31. And although all the devils did follow him hard, and did go with their deſire into the fleſh, yet the will of the ſoul ſhould ſtand ſtill and hide itſelf in the death of CHRIST, willing and deſiring nothing but the mercy of GOD.

32. No hypocritical flattery, or outward comforting one's ſelf, avails at all, as when men will cover ſin and iniquity in the fleſh,

with

with the ſatisfaction of CHRIST, and remain in ſelf ſtill. CHRIST ſays, *Except ye turn and become as children, ye ſhall not ſee the kingdom of God:* the mind muſt become as wholly new as in a child, that knows nothing of ſin. CHRIST ſays alſo, *Ye muſt be born anew, or elſe ye ſhall not ſee the kingdom of God.* There muſt ariſe a will wholly new in the death of CHRIST; it muſt be brought forth out of CHRIST's incarnation, or entering into the humanity, and riſe in CHRIST's reſurrection.

33. Now before this can be done, the will of the ſoul muſt die in the death of CHRIST firſt; for in *Adam* it received the ſon of the bondwoman, namely, ſin into it. This the will of the ſoul muſt firſt caſt out, and the poor captive ſoul muſt wrap itſelf up in the death of CHRIST earneſtly, and with all the power it has; ſo that the ſon of the bondwoman, namely, ſin, in itſelf, may die in the death of CHRIST.

34. Truly ſin muſt die in the will of the ſoul, or elſe there can be no viſion of GOD; for the earthly will in ſin, and the anger of GOD, ſhall not ſee GOD: but CHRIST that came into the fleſh. The ſoul muſt put on the ſpirit and fleſh of CHRIST: it cannot inherit

herit the kingdom of GOD in this earthly tabernacle; for the kingdom of ſin hangs to it outwardly, which muſt putrify in the earth, and riſe again in new power.

35. Hypocriſy, flattery, and verbal forgiveneſs, avails nothing; we muſt be children, not by outward imputation, but born of GOD from within, in the new man, which is reſigned in GOD.

36. All ſuch flattering of ourſelves, in ſaying, CHRIST has paid the ranſom, and made ſatisfaction for ſin, he is dead for our ſins: if we alſo do not in him die from ſin, and put on his merit in new obedience, and live therein, all is falſe, and a vain frivolous comfort.

37. He that is a bitter enemy and hater of ſin, he can and may comfort himſelf with the ſuffering of CHRIST; he that does not willingly ſee, hear, nor taſte ſin, but is at enmity with it, and would willingly always do that which is well and right, if he knew but what he ought to do: he that is ſuch a one, has put on the ſpirit and will of CHRIST.

38. The outward flattery of being accounted a child of GOD by imputation, or external application, is falſe and vain: the work

work done in the outward fleſh only, does not make the child of GOD, but the working of CHRIST in the ſpirit, makes, and is the child of GOD: which working is ſo powerful in the outward work, that it ſhines forth as a new light, and manifeſts itſelf to be the child of GOD in the outward work of the fleſh.

39. For if the eye of the ſoul be light, then the whole body is light in all its members. Now if any boaſt himſelf to be the child of GOD, and yet ſuffers the body to burn in ſins, he is not yet capable of being a child, but lies captive in the fetters of the devil, in great darkneſs: and if he do not find in himſelf an earneſt will burning in him, of well-doing in love, then his pretence is but an invention of reaſon, proceeding from ſelf, which cannot ſee GOD, unleſs it be born anew, and ſhew forth in its power and virtue that it is his child: for there is no fire but has light in it: and if the divine fire be in the mind, it will ſhine forth, and the mind will do that which GOD will have done.

40. But perhaps thou will ſay, I have a a will indeed to do ſo, I would willingly do it, but I am ſo hindred that I cannot.

41. Yes

41. Yes, thou vile man, GOD draweth thee to be his child, but thou will not: the ſoft cuſhion in evil is dearer to thee than ſo; thou prefers the joy of wickedneſs before the joy of GOD; thou wholly ſticks faſt in ſelf, and lives according to the law of ſin, and that hinders thee: thou are unwilling to die from the pleaſure of the fleſh, and therefore thou are not in the filiation, and yet GOD draws thee to it, but thou thyſelf will not.

42. O how fine a thing would the old *Adam* think it to be, if he might be taken into heaven with this will of the voluptuous fleſh, and to have the child of wickedneſs that is full of deceit, ſet upon the throne of GOD. *Lucifer* alſo would fain have had it ſo, but he was caſt out.

43. It is a troubleſome thing to mortify the evil will, none are willing to have it ſo: we would all willingly be the children of GOD, if we might be ſo with this garment of fleſhly luſt, but it cannot be. This world paſſes away, and the outward life muſt die, what good can the childhood in the mortal body do me?

44. If

44. If we would inherit the filiation, we muſt alſo put on the new man, which can inherit the filiation, which is like the Deity. GOD will have no ſinner in heaven, but ſuch as are born anew, and become children, which have put on heaven.

45. Therefore it is not ſo eaſy a matter to become the children of GOD as men imagine. Indeed it is not a burdenſome thing to him that has put on the filiation, whoſe light ſhines; for it is joy to him. But to turn the mind, and deſtroy ſelf, there is a ſtrong continual earneſtneſs requiſite, and ſuch a purpoſe, that if the body and ſoul ſhould part aſunder by it, yet the will ſhould perſevere conſtantly, and not enter again into ſelf.

46. A man muſt wreſtle ſo long, until the dark center that is ſhut up ſo cloſe, break open, and the ſpark in the center kindle, and from thence immediately the noble lily twig and branch ſprouts, as from the divine grain of muſtard-ſeed, as CHRIST ſays. A man muſt pray earneſtly, with great humility, and for a while become a fool in his own reaſon, and ſee himſelf as void of

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underſtanding therein, until CHRIST be formed in this new incarnation.

47. And then when CHRIST is born, *Herod* is ready to kill the child; which he ſeeks to do outwardly by perſecutions, and inwardly by temptations, to try whether this lily branch will be ſtrong enough to deſtroy the kingdom of the Devil, which is made manifeſt in the fleſh.

48. Then this deſtroyer of the ſerpent is brought into the wilderneſs, after he is baptized with the holy Spirit, and tempted and tried whether he will continue in reſignation in the will of GOD: he muſt ſtand ſo faſt, that if need require, he would leave all earthly things, and even the outward life, to be a child of GOD.

49. No temporal honour muſt be preferred before the ſiliation, but he muſt with his will leave and forſake it all, and not account it his own, but eſteem himſelf as a ſervant in it only, in obedience to his maſter; he muſt leave all worldly propriety. We do not mean that he may not have, or poſſeſs any thing; but his heart muſt forſake it, and not bring his will into it, nor count it his own; if he ſets his heart upon it,

it, he has no power to ſerve them that ſtand in need, with it.

50. Self ſerves only that which is temporary; but reſignation has rule over all that is under it. Self muſt do what the Devil will have it to do in fleſhly voluptuouſneſs, and pride of life; but reſignation treads it under the feet of the mind. Self deſpiſes that which is lowly and ſimple; but reſignation ſits down with the lowly in the duſt: it ſays, I will be ſimple in myſelf, and underſtand nothing, leſt my underſtanding ſhould exalt itſelf, and ſin. I will lie down in the courts of my GOD, at his feet, that I may ſerve my LORD in that which he commands me. I will know nothing of myſelf, that the commandment of the LORD may lead and guide me, and that I may only do what GOD doth through me, and will have done by me: I will ſleep until the LORD awaken me with his Spirit; and if he will not, then will I cry out eternally in him in ſilence, and wait his commands.

51. Beloved Brethren, men boaſt much now-adays of Faith, but where is that faith? The modern faith is but the hiſtory. Where

is

is that child which believes that JESUS is born? If that child were in being, and did believe that JESUS is born, it would alſo draw near to the ſweet child JESUS, and receive him, and nurſe him.

52. Alas! the faith now-adays is but hiſtorical, and a meer knowledge of the ſtory that the *Jews* killed him, that he left this world, that he is not king on earth in the animal man, but that men may do as they liſt, and need not die from ſin, and their evil luſts; all this the wicked child ſelf-rejoices in, that it may fatten the Devil by living deliciouſly.

53. This ſhows plainly that true faith was never weaker and feebler ſince CHRIST's time than it now is; when, nevertheleſs, the world cries aloud, and ſays, we have found the true faith, and contend about a child, ſo that there was never worſe contention ſince men were on earth.

54. If thou have that new-born child which was loſt and is found again; then let it be ſeen in power and virtue, and let us openly ſee the ſweet child JESUS brought forth by thee, and that thou are his nurſe; if not, then the children in CHRIST will

ſay,

ſay, thou has found nothing but the hiſtory, namely, the cradle of the child.

55. Where has thou the ſweet child JESUS, thou that are exalted with the hiſtory, and with thy falſe and ſeeming faith? O how will the child JESUS viſit thee in the Father's property in thy own anger which thou has cheriſhed? It calls thee now in thy love, but thou will not hear; for thy ears are ſtopped with covetouſneſs and voluptuouſneſs, therefore the ſound of the trumpet ſhall ſhiver thee with the hard thunder-clap of GOD's anger, and awaken thee, if perhaps thou will yet ſeek and find the ſweet child JESUS.

56. Beloved brethren, this is a time of ſeeking, and of finding: it is a time of earneſtneſs; whom it touches, it touches home: he that watches ſhall hear and ſee it; but he that ſleeps in ſin, and ſays in the fat days of his voluptuouſneſs, all is peace and quiet; we hear no ſound from the LORD; he ſhall be blind. But the voice of the LORD has ſounded in all the ends of the earth, and in the trouble that is upon the face of the earth a ſmoke ariſes, and in the midſt of the ſmoke there is a great bright-

neſs and ſplendor, in the divine light that is in the children of GOD.

HA LE LU-JAH. AMEN.

Shout unto the LORD *in Sion, for all mountains and hills are full of his glory: he flouriſhes like a green branch, and who ſhall hinder it?*

HAL LE LU-JAH.

THE
WAY we muſt WALK
THROUGH
This World into the Kingdom of GOD.

YOU muſt go out from your reaſonings in the fleſhly ſpirit, and bring your heart, mind, and thoughts, wholly into the obedience of GOD, and yield yourſelves into GOD's will, and do not feign ways of your own reaſon, or aſk where CHRIST is? Direct your way into CHRIST, and know for certain that CHRIST is in your heart: ſubmit yourſelf to him in great humility, caſt all your purpoſes and doings into his will and pleaſure, and conſider that

you always ſtand in the preſence of GOD, and that CHRIST ſits at the right hand of GOD in you. Conſider you ſtand every moment before the holy number THREE: And that GOD always examines and ſees into the moſt ſecret receſſes of your heart; and take heed you enter into no deep thought or ſearching, but meerly into his love and mercy: and reſolve never to go out from it any more, but ever to continue therein.

And then, ſecondly, conſider that you do what is pleaſing in the ſight of GOD the moſt High, when you ſeek with love your brethren in this world, whoſoever they are, and by what name ſoever they are called, and of what opinion ſoever they are of, embrace them in your heart, pray for them, and help them to wreſtle againſt the Devil, and as far as is poſſible inſtruct them in all humility: But if they will not receive it; then put on the meekneſs of CHRIST, and be a good example to them; be ſerviceable and helpful to them; forgive them when they hurt and wrong you: when they curſe you, do you bleſs them; when they do you injury, if you cannot turn it into good, and avoid them,

let it pass, and consider you are but a pilgrim here. Withdraw your love from none, for your GOD, in whom you live, withdraweth himself from none that seek him. Be readily yielding to your adversary, if he once offer to turn his mind. In all your affairs, and conversation, love righteousness, and always have a care that you do your work for GOD. We must in this world, in this troublesome valley of misery, compass our affairs with labour and pains. We should not go into holes, cloysters, cells, and corners: for CHRIST saith, *Let your light shine before men, that your Father may have praise in your works.* Do all things from a sincere heart, in a pure mind, and consider you do it to CHRIST, and that the Spirit of CHRIST doth it in you. Be always ready, expecting the Bridegroom. Let your heart have no leave to meditate and search into any other opinion: It is not profitable for you to know much of mens opinions. Let every one learn to do his own work, wherewith he may have sustenance for his body, whether he be superior or inferior.

Let the magistrate learn righteousness, and to distinguish the false from the pure,

for he is the officer of GOD: what he doth and judgeth, that he judgeth for GOD and GOD through him. Let the laity be humble and reſpective before the ordinance of GOD. If any wrong be done him with a high hand, and that it cannot be otherwiſe, let him conſider that he ſuffers wrong for the truth ſake, and that it is a great honour for him in CHRIST, in the preſence of GOD.

In all your matters, actions, converſations, and dealings, always ſet the judgment of GOD before your eyes, and have a care that you live blameleſsly here; for this life-time is ſhort, and we ſtand here in a field growing: therefore ſee that you be good fruit for GOD, at which all the angels and hoſts of heaven may be pleaſed and rejoice. Bear malice to none, for that inviteth the Devil to a lodging in your heart. Be ſober and temperate: let not the deſire of this world perſuade you; and though it happens ſometime through temptations, do not go on in it. Go every hour out of death into life: crucify yourſelves in true repentance and converſion from evil.

When you are reproached for fearing GOD, and evil ſpoken of, and what is ſaid

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be falſe and untrue, then rejoice moſt of all, in that you are become worthy to ſuffer reproach for the doctrine and honour of CHRIST. When you are in affliction, be not diſmayed; conſider you are in the will of GOD, he will ſuffer no more to be laid upon you than you ſhall be able to bear.

Turn away your eyes from covetouſneſs, from high-mindedneſs and ſtate; and be not ready to look after ſuch things, leſt you be captivated: for the Devil catcheth the ſouls of men with ſtate and high-mindedneſs, but go not into his net. Be always watchful, never be ſecure: for that fowler goes conſtantly about to ſee where he can catch any one. Where honeſt virtuous people are mocked and ſcorned, go not thither, make not yourſelves partakers of ſuch wickedneſs, let it not enter into your ears; that the Devil may not tickle your heart with that fooliſh laughter, and ſo you become infected with it.

Briefly, commit yourſelves to GOD in CHRIST, and pray to GOD the Father, in the name and upon the promiſe of CHRIST, for his holy Spirit; deſire it upon CHRIST's promiſe, and ſo you will receive it: for he is faithful who hath

promiſed it; he will not deny you of it; you will moſt certainly receive it. — Only give yourſelf wholly up to him, that is the greateſt and chiefeſt thing: commit all to his will: and then his Spirit will teach you ſufficiently what you are to do: he teaches you to ſpeak: he gives you a mind and knowledge, and underſtanding how to behave yourſelves. Be not careful therefore after what manner you ſhould do a thing, when you are to deal with men; but commit all your doings to him; he will do that in you well enough which is well-pleaſing to GOD.

But go on in the power of GOD, and then all your doing is well-pleaſing to GOD; for that any defends himſelf againſt his enemies upon neceſſity, without any other intent or deſire, that is not againſt the commands of GOD; for he who has his houſe on fire, may quench it: yea GOD has given leave to *Iſrael* to defend themſelves.

But he that cauſeth and beginneth a war, he is the Devil's officer: for all wars are driven on by anger, wherein the Devil dwelleth. GOD has not been the author of wars; for he created us in love; that we ſhould live together in paradiſe in friendly love, as lov-

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ing children: but the Devil envied us that happineſs, and led us into the ſpirit of this world, which has awakened all wars and miſchief in the anger of GOD, ſo that we hate and murder ourſelves.

Seeing then we are thus ſurrounded with enemies in this valley of miſery, and grow among thorns and thiſtles, we ought to watch: we muſt watch alſo over the enemy we carry in our boſom, namely, our mind and thoughts, for that is the worſt enemy, as therein the Devil has his den of thievery, and great labour and toil is required to caſt him out: he ſlips many times into our mind, and leads us on in ſmooth, delightful, hypocritical ways: ſo that we ſuppoſe we are in GOD's Spirit, and that our ways are right: but there we ſhould conſtantly have our touchſtone with us, which is the bleſſed love towards GOD and towards man. We ſhould not take pleaſure in ourſelves; but we ſhould be of ſuch a converſation, that GOD and man may take pleaſure in us for our virtue. Self-ſeeking muſt be quenched, and true reſignation to the will of GOD muſt grow and flouriſh.

When we thus converſe in the love and the righteouſneſs of GOD, and in the obe-

dience of faith; then we put on CHRIST, who ſetteth the fair crown of pearls upon us; he crowneth us with his wiſdom, to which we were blind before.

The ſufferings of this world, if they cannot be avoided, are not worthy to be called ſufferings, in reſpect of the great glory which ſhall be manifeſted on us by CHRIST.

We ſtand here between heaven and hell in a field, and there groweth either an Angel or a Devil out of us: therefore if any have a love to the kingdom of heaven, and would fain be an angel, he ought to look to himſelf.

Thou haſt free-will, whitherſoever thou inclineſt, thither thou art: what thou ſoweſt, that thou ſhalt alſo reap.

Be not deceived, God is not to be mocked; for whatever a man ſoweth, that ſhall he alſo reap.

For he that ſoweth to the fleſh, ſhall of the fleſh reap corruption; but he that ſoweth to the Spirit, ſhall of the Spirit reap everlaſting life.

THE

PARABLE

OF A

PILGRIM.

Taken from an ancient ſpiritual Writer.

THERE

THE PARABLE OF A PILGRIM.

1. THERE was a man that had a great desire to go to *Jeruſalem*; and becauſe he knew not the right way, he addreſſed himſelf for advice to one that he hoped was not unſkilful in it; and aſked him if there was any way paſſable thither? The other anſwered, the way was both long, and full of very great difficulties: yea, that there were many ways that ſeemed, and promiſed to lead thither, but the uncertainty and danger of them were too great. Nevertheleſs, one way he knew, which, if diligently purſued, according to the directions and marks that he would give, might be ſafely travelled, and went ſtraight thither. Not, ſays he, that I can promiſe thee a Security from many frights, beatings, and other ill uſage, and alſo temptations of all kinds.

kinds. But if thou can have courage and patience enough to ſuffer them, without quarrelling, reſiſting, or troubling thyſelf, and paſs on, having this only in thy mind, and ſometimes on thy tongue; I HAVE NOUGHT: I AM NOUGHT: I DESIRE NOUGHT, BUT TO BE AT JERUSALEM: My life for thine, thou ſhall eſcape ſafe with thy life, and in a competent time arrive at that city.

2. The Pilgrim, overjoyed with this news, anſwered, So I may have my life ſafe, and may at laſt come to the place that I above all things only deſire, I care not what miſeries I ſuffer in my way. Therefore let me know only what courſe I am to take, and, GOD willing, I will not fail to obſerve carefully your directions. The Guide replied, Since thou has ſo good a will, though I myſelf never was ſo happy to be in *Jeruſalem*, yet be confident, that by the inſtructions I ſhall give thee, if thou will follow them, thou ſhall come ſafe to thy journey's end.

3. Now the advice that I am to give thee in brief is this. Before thou ſet the firſt ſtep into the highway that leads to *Jeruſalem*, thou muſt be firmly grounded in the love of GOD, and faith in JESUS CHRIST; moreover, whatſoever ſins thou find in thy conſci-

conſcience, thou muſt ſeek to purge them away by hearty ſincere repentance. This being done, begin thy journey in GOD's name; but be ſure to go furniſhed with two neceſſary inſtruments or companions; namely, Humility and Charity: both which will unite in the before mentioned ſpeech, which muſt always be ready in thy mind: I AM NOUGHT: I HAVE NOUGHT: I DESIRE BUT ONE ONLY THING, AND THAT IS OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST, AND TO BE WITH HIM IN PEACE AT JERUSALEM. The meaning and virtue of theſe words therefore thou muſt have continually, at leaſt in thy thoughts, either expreſsly or virtually. Humility ſays, *I am nought: I have nought.* Love ſays, *I deſire nought but* JESUS CHRIST. Theſe two companions thou muſt never part from; neither will they willingly be ſeparated from one another; for they accord very lovingly together: and the deeper thou groundeſt thyſelf in humility, the higher thou raiſeſt thyſelf in charity: for the more thou ſee and feel thyſelf to be nothing but a worm, with the more fervent love will thou deſire CHRIST, that by him, who is ALL, thou may become Something that may be acceptable to GOD.

4. Now

4. Now this ſame Humility is to be exerciſed, not ſo much in conſidering thy own ſelf; thy ſinfulneſs, and thy miſery (although to do this at the very firſt be good and profitable) but rather in a quiet, loving ſight of the infinite, endleſs being, and goodneſs of GOD, in his Son JESUS CHRIST. The which beholding of GOD's love, muſt be either through grace, in a feeling knowledge of CHRIST formed in thee, in the new birth; or at leaſt in a full and firm faith in him. And ſuch a beholding, when thou ſhall attain to it, will work in thy mind a far more pure, ſpiritual, ſolid, and perfect humility, than the former way of beholding thyſelf; the which produces an humility more groſs, boiſterous and unquiet. For by ſeeing the love of GOD in JESUS CHRIST, thou will both ſee, and feel thyſelf not only to be the moſt wretched filthy creature in the world, but alſo in the very ſubſtance of thy ſoul (ſetting aſide the foulneſs of thy actual ſins) to be nothing but a meer worm: for truly in and of thyſelf, and without JESUS CHRIST, who really and in truth is all that is acceptable to GOD, thy ſoul is a horrible image. And until thou receive the image of CHRIST, and feel thou has his love, (notwithſtanding

ſtanding thou has done, to thy own thinking, never ſo many good deeds) yet in truth thou has nothing for thy comfort; for nothing will abide of good in thy ſoul, and ſatisfy it, but the love of GOD in CHRIST. Therefore caſt all other things behind thee, and forget them; that thou may have that which is beſt of all. And by thus doing, thou will become a true Pilgrim, that leaves behind him houſes, and wife, and children, and friends, and goods, and makes himſelf poor, and bare of all things, that he may go on his journey lightly, with joy, and without hindrance.

5. Well now thou are in thy way, travelling towards *Jeruſalem*; the which travelling conſiſts in working inwardly, and (when need is) outwardly too, ſuch works as are ſuitable to thy condition and ſtate, and ſuch as will help and increaſe in thee this gracious deſire that thou has to be united to CHRIST in *Jeruſalem*. Let thy works be what they will, thinking, or reading, or preaching, or labouring, *&c.* if thou find they draw thy mind from worldly vanity, and confirm thy heart and will more to the love of CHRIST, it is good and profitable for thee to uſe them. And if thou find that

through

through cuſtom ſuch works do in time loſe their ſavour, and virtue to increaſe this love, and that it ſeems to thee that thou feel more grace and ſpiritual profit in ſome other; take theſe other, and leave thoſe: for, though the inclination and deſire of thy heart to CHRIST muſt ever be unchangeable, nevertheleſs thy works that thou ſhall uſe in thy manner of praying, reading, *&c.* to the end to feed and ſtrengthen this deſire, may well be changed, according as thou feel thyſelf by grace diſpoſed in the applying of thy heart. Bind not thyſelf therefore unchangeably to voluntary cuſtoms, for that will hinder the freedom of thy heart to love CHRIST, if grace ſhould viſit thee in a ſpecial manner.

6. Before thou has made many ſteps in the way, thou muſt expect a world of enemies, of ſeveral kinds, that will ſet thee round about; and all of them will endeavour buſily to hinder thee from going forward; yea, if they can by any means, they will either by perſuaſion, flattery, or violence, force thee to return home again to thoſe vanities thou has forſaken: for there is nothing grieves them ſo much, as to ſee a reſolute deſire in thy heart to love CHRIST,

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and to travel to find him; therefore they will all conſpire to put out of thy heart that good deſire and love, in which all virtues are compriſed.

7. Thy firſt enemies to aſſault thee will be fleſhly deſires, and vain fears of thy corrupt heart, and with theſe will join unclean ſpirits, that with ſubtil temptations will ſeek to allure thy heart to them, and to withdraw it from JESUS: but whatſoever they ſay, believe them not; but betake thyſelf to thy old, only, ſecure remedy, anſwering always thus; *I am nought: I have nought: and I deſire nothing but the love of* GOD *in* CHRIST: and ſo hold forth on thy way, deſiring CHRIST only.

8. If they endeavour to put dreads and ſcruples into thy mind, and would make thee believe that thou has not repented as thou ought for thy ſins, but that ſome old ſins remain in thy heart not yet repented of, and that therefore thou muſt return back to repent of thoſe ſins, before thou have the boldneſs to go to GOD in the merits of CHRIST. Do not believe a word of all that they ſay; for by thy ſincere repentance, the blood of CHRIST has cleanſed thee from thy ſins; and there is no need at all that thou

ſhould

ſhould ſtay to ranſack thy conſcience, for this now will do thee harm, and either put thee quite out of thy way, or at leaſt unprofitably delay thy travelling in it.

9. If they ſhall tell thee, that thou are not worthy to have the love of GOD, nor to ſee CHRIST: and therefore that thou ought not to be ſo preſumptuous to deſire and ſeek after CHRIST; believe them not, but go on, and ſay, It is not becauſe I am worthy, but becauſe I am unworthy of GOD's love, that I deſire to find CHRIST, who is worthy: and who will, by uniting my ſoul to himſelf, make me worthy. I will therefore never ceaſe deſiring to be united to CHRIST, until I have obtained it. For it was for that union only that my ſoul was created! therefore, ſay and do what you will, I will deſire it continually; I will never ceaſe to pray for it; and by ſo doing, I hope, through GOD's mercy, to obtain it.

10. If thou meet with any that ſeem friends to thee, and that in kindneſs would ſtop thy progreſs, by entertaining thee, and ſeeking to draw thee to ſenſual mirth, by vain diſcourſes and carnal ſolaces, whereby thou will be in danger to forget thy pilgrimage; give a deaf ear to them, anſwer them

them not: think only on this, *That thou would fain be at Jeruſalem.* And if they proffer thee gifts and preferments, heed them not, but think ever on *Jeruſalem.*

11. And if men deſpiſe thee, or lay any falſe calumnies to thy charge, giving thee ill names: or if they go about to defraud thee, or rob thee; yea, if they beat thee and uſe thee deſpitefully and cruelly; for thy life contend not with them: ſtrive not againſt them, nor be angry with them: But content thyſelf with the harm received, and go on quietly as nought was done, that thou take no farther harm. Think only on this; that to be at *Jeruſalem* deſerves to be purchaſed with all this ill uſage, or more; and that there thou ſhall be ſufficiently repaired for all thy loſſes, and recompenſed for all hard uſages by the way.

12. If thine enemies ſee that thou grow courageous and bold, and that thou will neither be ſeduced by flatteries, nor diſheartned with the pains and troubles of thy journey, but rather well contented with them, then they will begin to be afraid of thee: yet for all that they will never ceaſe purſuing thee; they will follow thee all along

along the way, watching all advantages againſt thee; and ever and anon they will ſet upon thee, ſeeking, either with flatteries or frights, to ſtop thee, and drive thee back if they can. But fear them not; hold on thy way, and have nothing in thy mind but *Jeruſalem*, and JESUS CHRIST, whom thou will find there.

13. If thy deſire of CHRIST ſtill continues, and grows more and more ſtrong, ſo that it makes thee go on thy way courageouſly; they will tell thee, that it may very well happen that thou will fall into corporal ſickneſs; and perhaps ſuch a ſickneſs as will bring ſtrange fancies into thy mind, and melancholy apprehenſions; or perhaps thou will fall into great want, and no man will offer to help thee: by occaſion of which misfortunes thou will be grievouſly tempted by thy ghoſtly enemies, who will then inſult over thee, and tell thee, that thy folly and proud preſumption has brought thee to this miſerable paſs, that thou can neither help thyſelf, nor will any man help thee, but rather hinder thoſe that would. All this they will do, to the end that they may increaſe thy melancholy and unquiet apprehenſions;

henſions; or to provoke thee to anger, or malice againſt thy chriſtian brethren, or to murmur againſt GOD; for perhaps CHRIST may, for thy trial, ſeem to hide his countenance from thee; but ſtill reſiſt theſe ſuggeſtions, and be as though thou heard them not. Be angry with nobody, and in all thy diſeaſes, poverty, and whatſoever ſufferings (for who can reckon all) that may befal thee, keep JESUS CHRIST in thy mind; think on the leſſon that he has taught thee: and go on ſaying, *I am nought: I have nought: I care for nought in this world: I deſire nought but the love of* GOD *in* CHRIST: *and to be united to him, and to dwell in peace at Jeruſalem.*

14. But if it ſhall happen ſometimes, as likely it will, that through ſome of theſe temptations, and thy own frailty, thou ſtumble, and perhaps fall down and get ſome harm thereby; or that thou for ſometime wander a little out of the right way: get up again as ſoon as poſſibly may be, come again into thy inward man, and return into the right way. Do not trouble thyſelf overmuch, or too long with thinking upon thy paſt misfortune, for that will do thee more harm,

harm, and give advantage to thy enemies. Therefore repent, take more care, and make haſte to go on in thy journey and working again, as if nothing had happened. Keep but CHRIST in thy mind, and deſire to gain the love of GOD in him, and nothing ſhall be able to hurt thee.

15. At laſt when thy enemies perceive, that thy deſire to be united to CHRIST is ſo ſtrong, that thou will not regard either poverty, miſchief, ſickneſs, melancholy doubts, nor fears; life nor death; but will go on in the deſire of that one thing needful, the obtaining of GOD's love in CHRIST, and will be ſatisfied with nothing elſe. That thou deſpiſeſt all earthly things, and hold on praying for the aſſiſtance of GOD's holy Spirit, and with ſubmiſſion and reſignation to the divine will: then they will grow enraged and ſpare no manner of cruel uſage, they will come cloſer to thee than they ever did before, and betake themſelves to their laſt and moſt dangerous aſſault; that is, they will bring into the ſight of thy mind, all thy good deeds and virtues, ſhewing thee that men praiſe thee, and love thee, and bear thee great veneration for thy holineſs, *&c.*

&c. and all this they will do to the end to raiſe vain joy, and pride in thy heart. But if thou deſire thy life in CHRIST, thou will hold all this flattery, and falſehood, to be a deadly poiſon to thy ſoul mingled with honey: therefore away with it, caſt it from thee, ſaying thou will have none of it, and that thy deſire is to be at *Jeruſalem*.

16. And to the end to put thy ſoul out of the danger and reach of ſuch temptations, ſuffer not thy thoughts willingly to run about the world, but draw them all inwards, fixing them upon CHRIST only, to think only upon him, to poſſeſs him, to love him. And after thou has brought thyſelf to do thus, then whatſoever thou ſees, or feels inwardly, that is not him, will be unwelcome and painful to thee; becauſe it will ſtand in thy way of ſeeing him, and of enjoying his preſence whom thou only deſires.

17. But yet if there be any work or outward buſineſs which thou are obliged to do, or that charity, or preſent neceſſity requires of thee, either concerning thyſelf, or thy brother, fail not to do it, diſpatch it as well, and as ſoon as thou can, and let it not tarry long in thy thoughts, for it will but hinder

thee in thy principal buſineſs. But if it be a matter of no neceſſity, or that concerns thee not in particular, trouble not thyſelf, nor diſtract thy thoughts about it; but get rid of it quickly out of thy heart, ſaying ſtill thus, *I am nought: I can do nought: I I have nought: and nought do I deſire, but only to live in* JESUS CHRIST, *and be at Jeruſalem.*

18. Thou will be forced, as all other Pilgrims are, to take oftentimes by way of refreſhments, meat and drink, and ſleep, yea and ſometimes innocent recreations; in all which things uſe diſcretion, and take heed of fooliſh ſcrupuloſity.

19. To conclude; remember always that thy principal aim, and indeed only buſineſs is, to be united to CHRIST. To ſtrengthen this deſire daily by prayer for the aſſiſtance of GOD's holy Spirit, and by other ſpiritual workings, to the end it may never go out of thy heart. And whatſoever thou find proper to encreaſe that deſire of being united to CHRIST, be it by praying or reading, ſpeaking or being ſilent, travelling or reposing, make uſe of it for the time, as long as thy ſoul finds ſavour in it, and as long as

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it increaſes this deſire of having and enjoying nothing but the love of GOD in CHRIST, and being with him in true peace in *Jeruſalem*: and be aſſured, that this good deſire thus cheriſhed, and continually increaſed, will bring thee ſafe unto the end of thy pilgrimage.

That the Will being dead to itſelf, lives entirely to the Will of GOD.

1. THE *French* ſpeak with a ſingular propriety of the death of men, for they call it an overpaſſing, and the dead, overpaſſed; intimating, that death is but a paſſing from one life to another; and to die is no other thing but to overpaſs the confines of this life, to arrive at a ſtate of immortality. True it is, our will can no more die than our ſoul, yet does ſhe ſometimes go beyond the limits of her ordinary life, to live wholly in the divine will. Then it is that ſhe neither can nor will deſire any thing at all, but reſigns and gives up herſelf totally, and without reſerve, to the good pleaſure of the divine Spirit, that ſhe may be united to JESUS CHRIST, and that her life may be hid with him in GOD, where ſhe then lives, not in her own will but in the will of JESUS CHRIST, whoſe image ſhe then bears.

2. What becomes of the brightneſs of the ſtars, when the ſun appears in our horizon?

rizon? certainly their light is in no wiſe diminiſhed, but unites with, and is happily received into the ſun's ſuperior ſplendor. Thus man's will, when it is entirely given up and reſigned to GOD's good pleaſure, does not periſh, but is happily joined in that union for which the ſoul was originally created. It acts not ſepartely, but in the will of GOD: it appears not, as being abſorbed in the divine will.

3. A ſoul perfectly reſigned to GOD, is not to have any will of her own, but is ſimply to follow the will of GOD. And as one in a ſhip does not proceed in his voyage by his own motion, but leaves himſelf to be carried by the motion of the veſſel in which he is; ſo the ſoul, that is embarked in the divine pleaſure, ought to have no other will than that of permitting itſelf to be conducted by the divine will. And then the will does not ſay, as before, thy will be done, not mine; for there is now no will to be renounced. But it ſpeaks to this effect; LORD, I put my whole will, and the deſire of my ſoul, into thy hands; even as though it had not its will in its own diſpoſing: and it is now at the diſpoſal of thy divine will. Thus the ſoul that

is dead to her own will, that ſhe may live in CHRIST to GOD, is without any particular will, remaining not only conformable and ſubject, but as it were annihilated in herſelf, to be converted by CHRIST, in total reſignation to GOD's will. Or as one may ſay of a little child, who has not yet got the uſe of his will, to love or deſire any thing, ſave the milk of his dear mother's breaſts: for he diſcerns not of which ſide he would rather be, or any other thing elſe, except only to be in his mother's arms, with whom he eſteems himſelf one ſame thing; never troubling himſelf how he ſhould conform his will to his mother's; for he perceives not his own, nor does he think he has any; leaving all the care to his mother, to go, to do, and to will what ſhe judges profitable for him.

4. It is truly the higheſt perfection of our will, to be thus united to our ſovereign good, as was his, who ſaid, O LORD, thou has conducted and led me in the way of thy will! Expreſſing thereby, that he had made no uſe of his own will to conduct himſelf, but ſimply left the conduct and command thereof to the will of GOD.

5. Such

5. Such ſhould we be, pliable and tractable to GOD's good pleaſure; not giving our thoughts leave to wander in wiſhing and willing any thing, but leave it to GOD to will and do all for us, according to his goodneſs; throwing upon him all our ſolicitudes: becauſe he then has care of us, (as the Apoſtle ſays) as well thoſe which concern the events, as in the direction of the will; for he will have a care of the iſſue of our affairs, and of willing that which is beſt for us, if we give ourſelves up to his diſpoſal.

6. Let us then affectionately bleſs GOD in all his works, and ſay with *Job*, *Our* LORD *gave, and our* LORD *has taken away; the name of our* LORD *be bleſſed.* LORD, I will not will any events, but will let them be willed for me, even as thou ſhall pleaſe: yea, inſtead of willing the events, I will bleſs thee, in that thou has willed them. O what an excellent employment of our will is this, when ſhe leaves willing; and chooſes the effects of GOD's good pleaſure, to praiſe and thank him for ſuch effects.

Of Man's Happineſs in being commanded by GOD to love Him above all things.

1. MAN, in his regenerate ſtate, is the moſt perfect creature in the univerſe; the Spirit is the perfection of man; love is the perfection of the Spirit; divine charity is the perfection of love: wherefore the love of GOD is the end of perfection. And in this conſiſts the priority and extent of the commandment of divine love, called by our Saviour *the firſt and greateſt commandment*. This commandment is as a ſun, giving luſtre and dignity to all the holy laws, divine ordinances, and inſtructions contained in the ſcriptures. All is made to promote this heavenly love, and all tends to it. All inſpirations, exhortations, conſolations, and commands, are as the flowers of the ſacred tree of this commandment of loving GOD, with all our heart, with all

our ſoul, and with all our mind; and eternal life is as its fruit. And all that tends not to eternal love, tends to eternal death. O great commandment! whoſe perfect practice remains even in the everlaſting manſions, yea, is no other thing than life everlaſting.

2. O gracious GOD! How amiable is this law of love? If we could underſtand it, what an obligation ſhould we ſee this ſovereign good beſtows, by not only permitting, but even commanding us to love thee, that we may enjoy immortal felicity! O divine goodneſs, how amiable are thou, by granting unto me a bounty ſo immenſe! O bounty, how amiable are thou, in communicating unto me ſo eminent a good!

3. GOD, at the day of judgement, will imprint, in an admirable manner, in the hearts of the damned, the apprehenſion of their loſs; for the divine Majeſty will make them clearly ſee the ſovereign beatitude, and the treaſures of his bounty to the bleſſed: and upon the ſight of this abyſs of infinite delights, they will deſire with an extream violence to caſt themſelves upon him, to be united unto him, and to enjoy his love. But all in

vain: each ſhall be as a woman, who, in the pangs of childbirth, after ſhe has endured violent pains, and intolerable pangs, dies without being delivered. For as ſoon as the clear and fair knowledge of the heavenly beatitude ſhall have penetrated the underſtandings of thoſe unhappy wretches, the divine juſtice ſhall evidence to them the impoſſibility of their attaining it; and then ſhall their will be framed in ſuch ſort, that they can in no wiſe love ſo glorious an object, but inſtead thereof ſhall engender an infinite deſolation, which ſhall remain eternal, by a remembrance of the ſovereign beatitude, that will for ever continue in theſe damned ſouls, void of all good; yea full of vexations, pains, torments, and endleſs deſpair, ariſing from a dreadful and everlaſting averſion and repugnance to love the divine excellence. So that the miſerable damned ſhall live for ever in a deſperate rage to know ſo ſovereign and amiable a perfection, without all hope of ever being able to love, or enjoy it; becauſe they will be ſenſible they might have loved it in this life, but would not; they ſhall burn with a thirſt ſo much more violent, by how much

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the remembrance of their refuſing to drink of the waters of eternal life, ſhall increaſe their ardor: and it ſhall be ſo much the more ſharpned to extremity, by their calling to mind the heavenly banquet of which they deprived themſelves. It is not to be affirmed, that the view that the damned ſhall have of GOD's beatitude, ſhall be as bright as that the bleſſed enjoy: yet ſhall it be ſo clear, that they ſhall ſee the Son of Man in his majeſty, and in the glory of the Son of GOD; they ſhall ſee him whom they pierced, and ſcornfully rejected: and by the view of this glory, they ſhall feel the greatneſs of their loſs. O if GOD had prohibited man to love him, what a torment would it have been to generous hearts? what pains would they not have taken to have obtained permiſſion to love? The damned would eſteem themſelves bleſſed, if they could entertain a hope ever to love GOD: and the bleſſed would eſteem themſelves damned, if they harboured a thought that they ſhould be deprived of this ſacred love.

4. O good GOD! how delightful is the ſweetneſs of this commandment to love thee?

thee? ſeeing that if the damned could love thee, they would in a moment be delivered from their greateſt miſery: and ſince the bleſſed are alone bleſſed by the practice of it.

O heavenly love! how lovely are thou in the ſight of our ſouls? and bleſſed be the bounty of our GOD for ever, for ſo earneſtly commanding us to love him; though without ſuch command it is moſt to be deſired, and neceſſary to our happineſs, and that without it we muſt neceſſarily be miſerable.

Wherein the Force and Excellency of holy Love conſiſts.

1. HOW great an extent then, ought the force of this ſacred love of GOD above all things to have? It is to ſurpaſs all our other affections, to vanquiſh all our difficulties: It is to prefer the honour and happineſs of GOD's favour above all things, yea, I ſay, before all things abſolutely, without any the leaſt exception or reſervation at all; and I ſay this with the greateſt care, becauſe there are men who would courageouſly forſake their goods, honours, yea life itſelf for their religious principles, who yet will not follow their maſter JESUS CHRIST, nor leave for his ſake things of far leſs conſequence.

2. It is therefore true, that it is not enough for us to love GOD more than our temporal life; unleſs we alſo love him generally, abſolutely, and without reſerve;

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more than all we do, or can love beſide. But you may perhaps ſay, Did not our Saviour define the higheſt point of our love towards him, by telling his diſciples, that a man could not have a greater love, *than to lay down his life for his friends?* It is true indeed, that among the particular acts and teſtimonies of divine love, there is none ſo great as to undergo death for God's glory: yet is it alſo true, that it is but one only act, one only teſtimony, although indeed the higheſt ſingle act of real charity. But charity exacts many things at our hands, and is to regulate all our actions; and ſo much the more ardent our love to God is, the more eaſy will it make the common and ordinary actions of our lives, to lead to the love of our neighbour, as being generally more neceſſary to the conſervation of divine love. To will the act of dying only for our profeſſion of faith, excluding the love of our neighbour, is not divine charity, but vanity. Charity is not fantaſtical, yet ſhe would be ſo in the higheſt degree, if, being reſolved to pleaſe God in things of greateſt difficulty, ſhe ſhould permit any ſoul to diſpleaſe him in matters of leſs moment.

ment. How ſhould any one part with his life in pure love of GOD, who will not live according to his revealed will?

3. A ſincere diſciple of the bleſſed JESUS, that is led by the Spirit of GOD, deliberately to determine to die, if need be, for his friend; would alſo, without doubt, be aſſiſted to undergo all other things; for being brought to diſregard death, he would not ſet any great value upon other temporal things. But the mind of man, unaſſiſted by the divine Spirit, is weak, inconſtant, and humourous: he therefore often chooſes to part with his life, rather than undergo far ſlighter pains; and to prefer death to the parting with a frivolous, childiſh, and extreamly vain gratification of ſelf-will. How many have willingly embraced death for a falſe love of their friends, that would not live in their ſervice, nor attend to their other deſires? and ſuch there are, who will expoſe their lives to danger upon falſe ſentiments of honour, that would not open their purſe to ſave a friend from ruin. And though many may be found that would engage their life for their friends, yet ſcarcely in an age is there one to be found, that will

either

either give up his liberty, or loſe the leaſt part of the moſt vain and unprofitable reputation he may happen to have in the world, be it for the benefit and ſervice of ever ſo dear a friend.

That the Love of God produces the Love of our Neighbour.

1. AS God created man originally in his own image and likeneſs, he ordained man to love the image, in reſemblance of that love which is due to the Creator's own divinity. It was therefore our Lord anſwered to the queſtion aſked him, concerning man's duty to God, *Thou ſhalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart: This is the firſt and greateſt commandment; and the ſecond is like unto this, Thou ſhalt love thy neighbour as thyſelf.* Why do we love God? Becauſe he is the moſt ſovereign and infinite goodneſs. And why do we love man in charity? Surely becauſe all men are capable of being reſtored by regeneration to the image and likeneſs of God. And whereas all men are endued with power to turn

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the desire of their mind to love GOD, and thereby are capable to be advanced to the dignity of being *coheirs with* CHRIST, we love our neighbour in the quality of the most holy and lively image of the divinity. For it is in that quality, and in that only, we belong to GOD in so strict an alliance, and so amiable a dependence, that he makes no difficulty to be called Father; and we, when so united to him in CHRIST, he calls his children. It is in this quality that we are to be united to his divine essence, by the fruition of his sovereign bounty and felicity. It is in this quality that we receive additional grace, when our immortal spirits are associated to his most holy Spirit, and we, in CHRIST, are made to be partakers of his divine nature. Therefore the same charity that produces the acts of our love of GOD, produces also the acts of love of our neighbour. And as *Jacob* saw but one ladder which reached from heaven to earth, by which the angels did as well descend as ascend; so we even see that one and the same charity extends itself both to the love of GOD, and of our neighbour; raising us to the union of spirit with GOD, and yet

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bringing us back again to a loving, peaceable, and quiet ſociety with our neighbour. Yet with this difference, that we love GOD for his own excellency and goodneſs; and we love our neighbour, in that by regeneration he may be reſtored, in the image of JESUS CHRIST, to the likeneſs of GOD: in which image man was firſt created, to have communication with the divine bounty, to be a partaker of divine grace, and to enjoy the fruition of divine glory.

2. To love our neighbour in charity, is to love GOD in man, or man, regenerated, in GOD. It is to love GOD for his own perfection, and the creature for the love of GOD. When we view our neighbour as a creature in the image and likeneſs of GOD, ought we not to cheriſh him with love? ought we not to bleſs him at all times? And why this? for the love of his outward mortal body? no verily: for we know not whether in his outward nature he be worthy of love or hatred. But wherefore then? for the love of GOD, who at firſt created the ſoul of man to bear his own ſimilitude and likeneſs; and ſince man's fall, has made his immortal ſoul capable of being partaker

ker of divine goodneſs, grace and glory in JESUS CHRIST. I ſay, for the love of GOD, for whom the ſoul of man was created; whoſe right it is; and in whom, by JESUS CHRIST, it may be again united in a particular manner. Therefore the divine love does not only command the love of our neighbour, but oftentimes produces it by his Spirit in man's heart: for when the ſ[illegible] is by regeneration reſtored to GOD in the image of JESUS CHRIST; the love of man to man is the true reſemblance, or picture of the love of man to GOD.

Chriſtians ought to go over the Courſe of their Race in this World with Care and Exactneſs.

THEY that are deſirous to lead the life of a Chriſtian with any great exactneſs, the very firſt thing they are obliged to take care of, is, that leading power in the ſoul, by which we diſcern and underſtand things: that having once attained to a true adjuſtment of the difference between good and evil, and ever diſtinguiſhing the things that are introduced into, and contrary to their original nature, our converſation in the world may be always upright and inoffenſive; that ſo making uſe of this diſcerning power, we may keep ourſelves free from any engagement, and covenant with the ſuggeſtions of ſin; and being rewarded with the heavenly gift for ſo doing, may become worthy of the LORD. The body bears a fair reſemblance to the ſoul; and the things which are ſeen, to the things which are inviſible. For as the body has the eye for its guide, and this ſame guide, by its ſight,

conducts

conducts the body ſafe; and he that warily paſſes on, with all poſſible ſobriety and care, with his garments tucked up cloſe about him, keeping in the ſtrait path, may keep himſelf from harm, and avoid the being torn by the thorns, bemired in the bogs, falling down the precipices, or drowning in the waters on each ſide his way. After the very ſame manner, the ſoul alſo is endued with a diſcerning faculty, that directs the ſoul, which wears the fine garment of the body as its veſt, and may make its progreſs through the deſarts and thorns of life, and avoid the mires, flames, and precipices of the fleſhly appetites; and the pleaſures, and other abſurd fooleries of this preſent time, by paſſing on with ſobriety, courage, and induſtry, to preſerve herſelf, and her garment, the body, that it be not rent in the briers and thorns of the world: of cares, ſupineneſs, and earthly diſtractions. She may preſerve her garment from being burnt up with the fire of concupiſcence; her eyes from beholding wickedneſs; her ears from hearing ſlanders; her tongue from ſpeaking vanity; her hands and feet from evil undertakings: and by her will turn away and hinder the reſpective members of the body

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from abominable ſights; from hearing wicked and unchaſte diſcourſe; from ſpeaking as no ways becomes us; and from all worldly and ſinful devices.

The ſoul, by turning herſelf away from wicked reveries, may keep her heart ſo, that none of her thoughts can be hurried away in the ſpirit of this world: and through the power of the LORD, and by the aſſiſtance of his grace, that will be given her, if ſhe does all ſhe can to curb herſelf, ſhe may turn away from all worldly concupiſcence. For when the LORD ſhall obſerve any one turning from the pleaſures of this life, together with its groſs intanglements and perplexities, the earthly clogs, and reſtleſs workings of vain thoughts; he then vouchſafes the ſpecial aſſiſtance of further grace: and being ſuccoured by him, that ſoul, by continuing in perſeverance, goes over the ſtage of this preſent life, and finiſhes its courſe with ſucceſs.

This is the perſon that GOD takes into his ſpecial care, that works out his ſalvation with fear and trembling; ſeeking after the LORD for his aſſiſtance, and hoping in his mercy to be ſaved through grace.

Conſider the parable of the five wiſe and ſober virgins; they took oil in the veſſels

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of their hearts; that is, the grace of the holy Spirit from above, (a meaſure of which is given to every one to profit withal) and thereby had power to enter with the bridegroom into the heavenly ſtate. But the others, which were fooliſh, made no uſe of the oil of the heavenly grace firſt given them, but continued in their fallen nature, without any ſolicitude for the event, and were overwhelmed, as it were, with a deep ſleep, through negligence, idleneſs, and ſloth; truſting ignorantly even in an opinion of their own imaginary righteouſneſs; and therefore were excluded. For being kept faſt with the chain of their love to the things of this world, they gave not themſelves up to the heavenly bridegroom, neither received they any ſupply of the oil of the heavenly grace. But the wiſe virgins, being awakened, ſet their whole affections upon the LORD: in his way they walked, to him they prayed, and upon him were their thoughts employed, rejecting all things elſe; wherefore the Lord thought them worthy to receive the fulneſs of his divine grace, and they paſſed the remainder of their life well-pleaſing to the ſpiritual Bridegroom, and were admitted by him into the heavenly bridechamber.

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The five intellectual ſenſes of the ſoul, are in truth the five wiſe virgins, when they make uſe of the light (that enlighteneth every man that cometh into the world) and preſerve it by the oil of grace that cometh from above, and ſeek that which is foreign to their fallen nature, namely, the ſanctification of the Spirit; and give up their whole affection to the Lord, to walk in his way, and by prayer employ all their powers to paſs this life without falling. For thoſe ſouls rejecting all things elſe, adhere wholly and entirely to the Lord, and burn in the light of deſire and love of him.

But when thoſe intellectual ſenſes of the ſoul, ſleep in the darkneſs of their fallen nature, in the rejection of the light, and of the oil of grace given them, until it is gone out in the lamp of their heart. Then do they, as fooliſh virgins, continue groveling in their fallen ſtate; yet nevertheleſs by reaſoning in their earthly thoughts, and ſpeculating in their own carnal opinions, and attending to the converſation of thoſe who are wiſe in their own conceit, do they fancy themſelves to belong to the Bridegroom. But having nothing more than the righteouſneſs of the fleſh, are not of the holy Spi-

rit from above, neither do they receive the fulneſs of the oil of grace. For preferring their reaſonings upon the earth, they are found to be fooliſh; and notwithſtanding they take themſelves by the godlineſs of their diſcourſe, and demure appearance, to be the very ſpouſes of the Bridegroom, they are of the world, for they have not put off the ſpirit of the world. The ſouls thus bound down in the love of the world, deſire to have their converſation upon the earth; there they walk, and employ their thoughts, and there does the mind take up its abode. For which reaſon they turn not to the good wiſdom of the Spirit, which is gone out from their fallen nature, I mean the heavenly grace firſt given, to enable them to enter into communion with the Lord, and to obtain everlaſting ſalvation.

Through the diſobedience of the firſt man, our ſouls are fallen from their firſt purity, and have received the corruption of our earthly, ſenſual, and deviliſh affections, which, however eſtabliſhed by cuſtom and preſcription in the fallen nature, muſt be driven out by the heavenly gift of the Spirit, that our ſouls may be reſtored to our original purity. And unleſs by making uſe

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of the grace given to us, we obtain that love of the Spirit which is from heaven, by continual petitions and ſupplications in faith, with averſion to the world, and cleaving to this love, which is the Lord himſelf, and be ſanctified by that love of the Spirit, we ſhall never be able to obtain the heavenly kingdom.

God, who is infinite and uncreated, hath through his immenſe and inconceivable goodneſs, manifeſted himſelf in a body partaking of our nature, that by abridging himſelf of that inacceſſible glory unto which no man can approach, he might be united with the ſouls of his ſaints, and they be enabled to partake of the life of the godhead. For every creature has in its own nature a body, be it angel, ſoul, or devil. And however fine and ſubtil thoſe bodies may be, they have ſubſtance, form and image, according to their nature. And the ſoul hath its ſpiritual body, by which it ſees, hears, ſpeaks, acts, and performs all the offices of life, and being renewed and ſanctified by the holy Spirit, is united to the Lord, and becomes partaker of the glory which is incorruptible.

It is GOD that through his Saints works Wonders.

WHO was it that ſhut the gates of heaven? *Elias.* Or was it the Spirit of GOD in him that commanded the very rain? My opinion is, that he in whom the power of heaven is veſted, himſelf was ſeated within the mind of *Elias*, and that it was the Word of GOD through his tongue forbad the rain that it ſhould not come down upon the earth; and again he ſpoke, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the rain came down.

In like manner alſo *Moſes* threw down his rod, and it became a ſerpent. And again, he ſpoke, and it became a rod as before. He took aſhes out of the furnace, and ſcattered them, and they became boils. He ſmote, and there came up lice and frogs. Was human nature able to do theſe things? He ſpoke to the ſea, and it was divided;

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to the river, and it was turned into red blood. But manifeſtly the heavenly Power dwelt in him, and by his Word did theſe ſigns through *Moſes*.

When *Moſes* engaged *Amalek*, if he ſtretched out his hands towards GOD in heaven, he trod *Amalek* down: but if he let down his hands, *Amalek* had the better.

Joſhua the ſon of *Nun*, when he came to *Jericho*, he beſieged it ſeven days, without being able to do any thing: but when GOD commanded, the walls of themſelves fell down. And when *Joſhua* was entered into the land of promiſe, the LORD ſaid unto him, *Get you to the battle. Joſhua* anſwered, *As the* LORD *liveth, I will not go without thee.* And who was it that commanded the ſun to ſtand ſtill two hours longer in the heat of the battle? was it *Joſhua* in his nature as a man, or a Power preſent with him? It was, in truth, *The Word of* GOD, *who is* GOD.

How was *David* able without weapons to engage a giant in battle, as he did? When *David* ſlung the ſtone againſt the alien with his hand, the hand of GOD directed the ſtone, and the divine Power itſelf killed *Goliath*, and wrought the victory. For

David could not do it by his ſtrength, he being but weak in body.

When you hear of theſe things done, do not let your mind wander far from you. But ſeeing they were types and ſhadows of the true things; take thoſe things to yourſelf. For whenever you ſtretch out the hands of your mind, and your thoughts to heaven, and ſhall be willing to cleave to the Lord, Satan will then be inferior to your thoughts, and they, in the power of GOD, ſhall prevail. And as at *Jericho*, the walls fell down through the power of GOD, ſo now ſhall the walls of ſin that obſtruct the mind fall, and the cities of Satan, and all thy enemies, be, through the power of GOD, deſtroyed. Thus was, and now is, the power of GOD inceſſantly preſent with the righteous, working wonders, by the divine Word dwelling within them.

In like manner did the divine Word exert its influence in the Prophets, and adminiſtered the Spirit to their ſouls that they might prophecy, and ſpeak, when there were great things to be proclaimed to the world. For they did not ſpeak at all times, but at the pleaſure of the Word, and as the Spirit gave

them

them power, nevertheleſs the Word was at all times preſent with them.

If therefore the holy Spirit was conferred in ſuch a great degree upon the ſhadow; how much more in the new covenant, upon the coming of CHRIST, and upon the croſs, where there is the greateſt effuſion of Spirit. *I will pour out my Spirit*, ſays GOD, *upon all fleſh.* And this is that our bleſſed Lord confirmed; *I will be with you to the end of the world*; and *every one that ſeeketh, findeth. For*, ſays he, *if ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children; how much more will your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that aſk him.* Let every one then aſk in full aſſurance of faith.

But this is received and experienced by meaſure, as we aſk according to the will of GOD, and in patience and love towards him, the ſenſes of the ſoul being, as the apoſtle writes to the *Hebrews*, exerciſed to diſtinguiſh both good and evil; and in like manner alſo through the different gifts of grace, and by the help of the energy and power of the Spirit. For he that knows the treachery of ſin, defiling the ſoul through vile affections, and takes no notice of the aſſiſtance offered by the Spirit of truth within him,

to

to help his weakneſs, and renew his ſoul with that gladneſs which GOD would put into his heart: ſuch a one is corrupt, and hath no underſtanding to diſcern the manifold diſpenſations of the grace and peace of GOD.

And on the other hand, he that is favoured by the Lord with heavenly gifts, and finds himſelf in ſpiritual gladneſs, if he imagines himſelf ſecure from ſin, he is deceived, as not diſcerning the ſubtilty of ſin, through which he may fall unawares: neither does he underſtand that the growth and perfection in CHRIST is gradual, through the guidance and conduct of the holy and divine Spirit. Glory be to the Father, to the Son, and to the holy Ghoſt, for ever. *Amen.*

A

LETTER

FROM A

Clergyman of the Church of *England*, to the Publiſher.

DEAR SIR, *Oct.* 20, 1769.

THE inſtance in your laſt kind and pious Letter, of the poor unhappy man, whom you viſited in chriſtian compaſſion to his ſoul, was indeed very affecting. It was indeed a charitable office, and I wiſh he might be the better for it; though I am more and more convinced how little ground there

there is for hope at the laſt, when the whole life has been habitually wrong before: evil muſt be done away, and good muſt gain a form in the ſoul, ſo as to become its choice, and the prevailing principle, in the ſeaſon of freedom, when the mind is under no bias from fear and dread, for that is no time of liberty; and therefore when the preſſure is taken off, the ſoul, like a ſpring, returns to its former ſtate: nothing but what the ſoul chooſes, abides, and is incorporated (if one may ſo ſpeak) with it.

The doctrine of immediate mercy, upon a ſuppoſed faith, where the ſoul is not regenerated, is one rank error of almoſt every church; whereas if an arbitrary act of mercy would ſuffice, not a ſoul would be loſt, nor one Devil remain in hell, for with GOD is infinite mercy: but then it can only be adminiſtred according to his immutable laws of right, to ſouls capable of receiving it: and therefore the office of mercy is to provide means ſuited to the nature of free agents, to fit and qualify them for the reception of the divine love or bleſſedneſs; which then flows into the ſoul as naturally and neceſſarily as the air and light into our houſes.

I do

I do not ſcruple to pronounce, that every man living has the neceſſary means of ſalvation allowed him, according to the diſpenſation he is in; and that every change and accident (ſo called) of his life, is among thoſe means, and ſo contrived as to frame his mind and invite his choice; that he may will the good and eſchew the evil freely, till habit makes it natural to him; and then all is right and ſafe, ſo long as the ſoul depends upon GOD for the ſupply of grace. But how many various workings of providence go to the producing this event, even the angels know not. — A thouſand turns in life may be neceſſary to rectify one thought in its influence on the will; as more than a thouſand nerves and fibres are employed in every motion of the body. Thus the ways of GOD towards man, in making good to conſiſt with his free will and choice, are infinite; for he neither does nor can force freedom: and ſo the will is led by a thouſand different ways, windings, objects, motives, &c. &c. that all the impreſſions made on the mind in favour of good, may be abſolutely compatible with free will. — Life is one complicated ſcheme of providences in order to this end; and yet will not all do with many.

That

That expreſſion of the Apoſtle's, *No man calleth Jeſus* LORD, *but by the holy Ghoſt*; means not the bare office of the tongue, conſidered in itſelf; but only as it expreſſes the language of the heart principled in divine faith and love. Then the ſubſtance of the confeſſion is from the LORD and to the LORD, and not from man; in whom, as to his own proper ſource, dwelleth no good thing.

I am much of a ſolitary myſelf. It ſeems to me to be according to the general order of providence, that chriſtian friends ſhould be ſeparated, as we ſee is almoſt always the caſe; and that perhaps becauſe either thro' human reſpects on the one hand, or thro' human infirmities on the other, they might be hindrances to one another, and ſo ſuffer loſs in point of true fellowſhip.

I purpoſe to be in town on *Monday*, *November* 6. and ſhould your inclinations or buſineſs lead you to *London* then-abouts, I ſhall have the happineſs of ſome meetings with you. I am,

My dear SIR,

Your truly affectionate Friend, &c.

THE END.

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